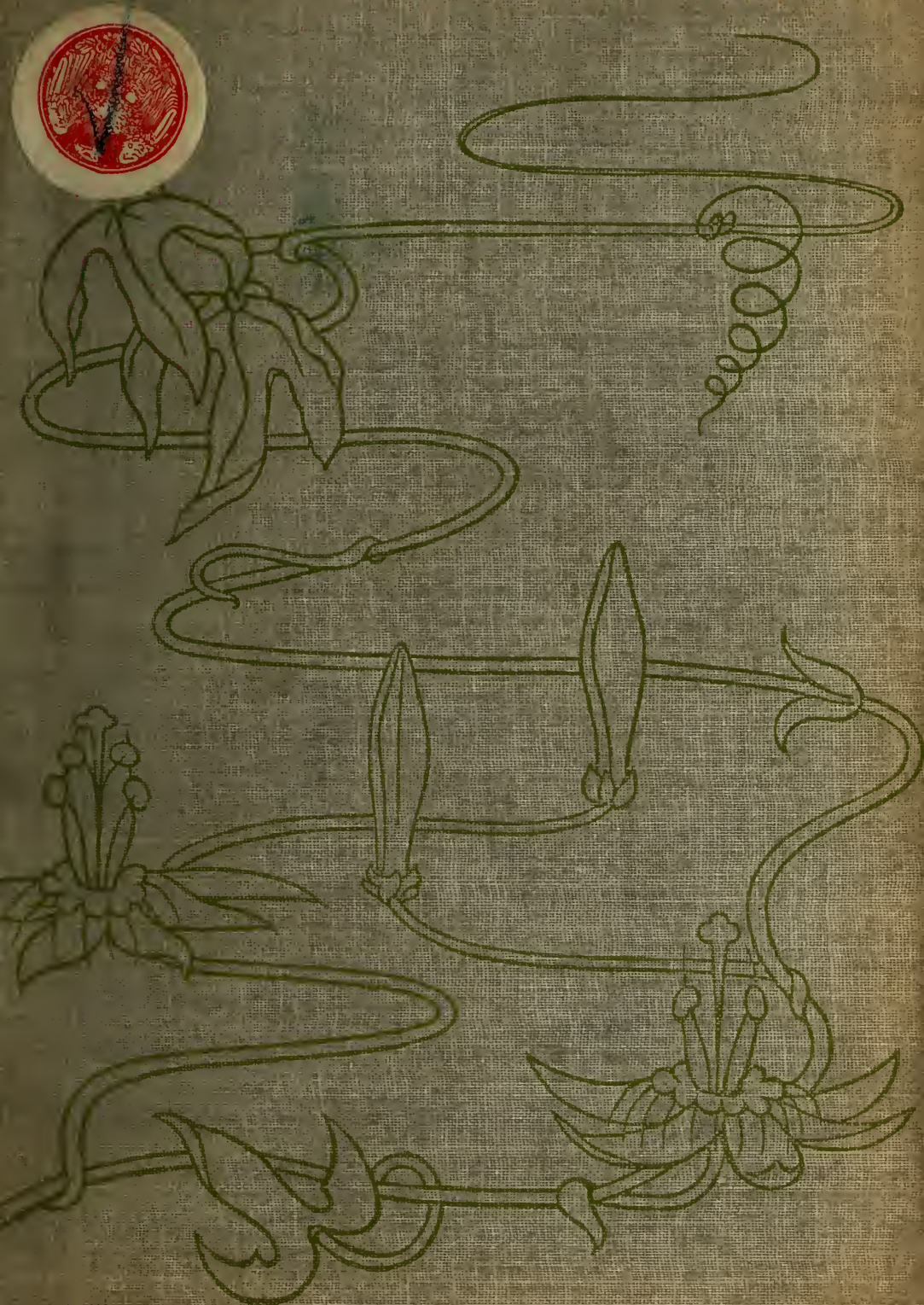
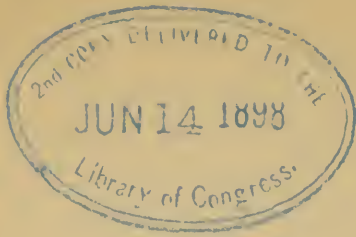


# CAPRICCIOS





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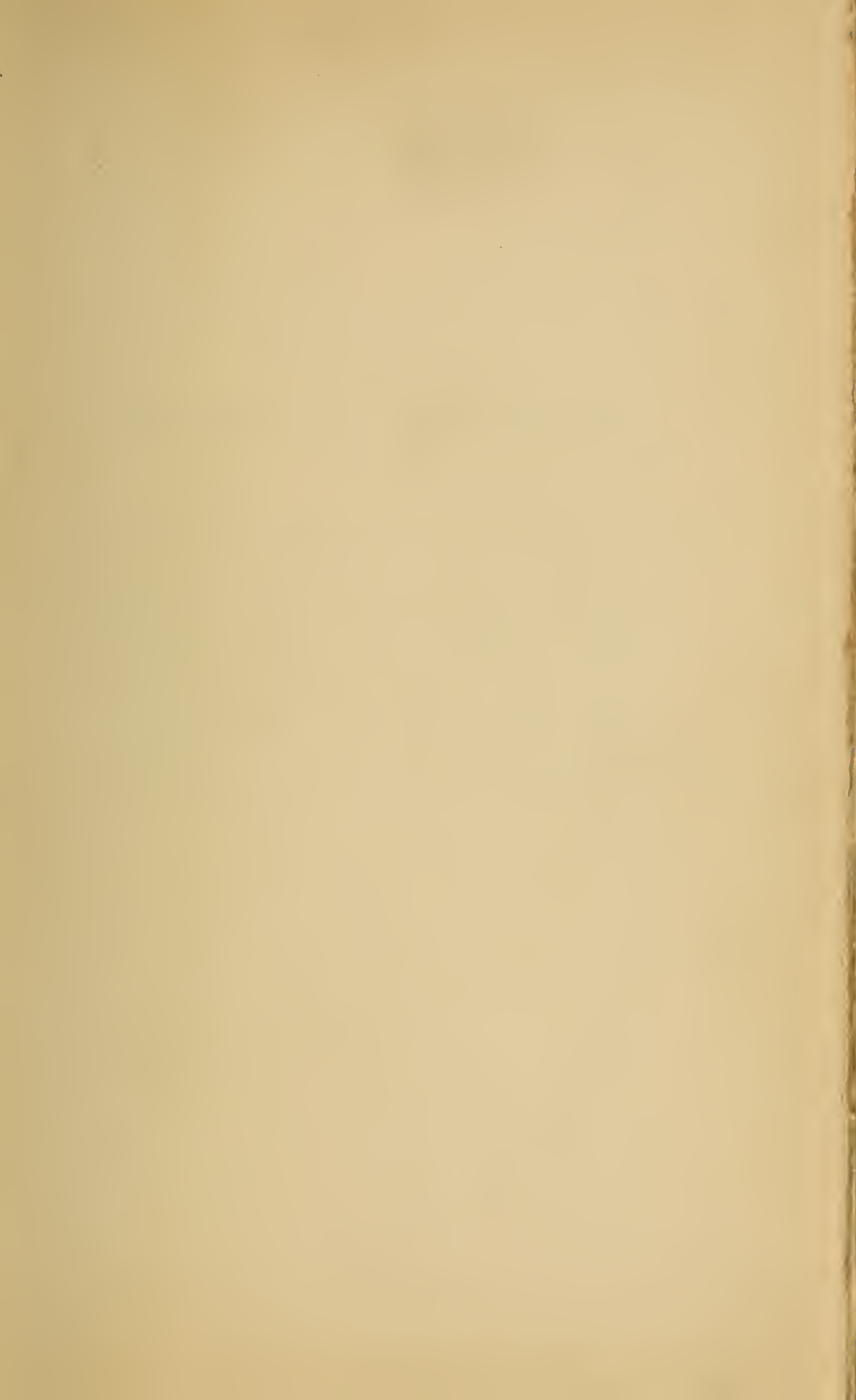
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G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS, NEW YORK & LONDON

CAPRICCIOS





# CAPRICCIOS

LOUIS J. BLOCK



G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS  
NEW YORK AND LONDON  
The Knickerbocker Press

1898

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TO MY FRIEND  
MRS. MARTHA D. WOLCOTT



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*He was the master pure  
Of harmonies that allure  
With a faery charm as dear  
As the magic of the awakening year ;  
Unto him came  
    Unworded songs,  
Miracles of flame,  
    Melodious throngs,  
Dreams of the midsummer nights  
Woven of the golden lights  
The greatest of souls  
Gave from the realm the chief joy controls,  
Lore of the strange far lands  
The sweet Queen Titania commands,  
Colored and born  
Of the incense-wafting morn,  
Tone-moulded lily and rose,  
Hope-hearted Capriccios.*

*May the propitious night above  
In the fair domains of love  
( The master hearkening, perhaps,  
    Where the rule of the hours,*

*And the long years' lapse,  
 And the vast of space,  
     Have surrendered their powers),  
 Grant me the high-thoughted grace  
 Once more to wield  
     A part of the glory he knew,  
 And generously yield  
     Unto my speech a hue,  
 A touch of the gladness,  
 The vanishing sadness,  
 That speed and glow  
 Through his soft music's flow.  
 Not that I hold,  
 Eager and overbold,  
 A scepter or throne  
 In the regions of tone ;  
 Suave influences there, oh give  
 That these frail blossoms may live  
 A brief clear day  
 Of hope-diffusing play,  
 Bringing great light from the eyes  
 Where the bright stars of beauty arise,  
 And fragrant breath from the lips  
 That break the sun's dim eclipse,  
 And, in this latter and dusk-stoled time,  
     Engirt of that light and warmed of that breath,  
     My flowers may burst the sheath of their death,  
 And bravely show forth the happier prime,  
 When the gods and man,*

*Being such friends as they only can,  
Reached the unenvying bliss that thrills  
Through equal conjoined wills.  
Blooms that I nurtured and brought from my heart  
To grace you therewith the best of my art,  
Gently fulfill your destiny brief  
With the flush of your crowns and the green of your  
leaf,  
Word-moulded lily and deep-tinted rose,  
My forward-looking Capriccios.*



THE BIRTH AND DEATH OF THE  
PRINCE

---

*Dramatis Personæ*

THE QUEEN  
THE LADY OF THE MERE  
MORGAUSE LE FAY  
ELAINE  
ENID  
THE KING  
ARTHUR  
MERLIN

Three Queens, Ladies, Councillors, Knights,  
Sailors, People





## I.

A castle near the sea-shore. The gardens extend down to the water. On either side heavy growths of wood, in front a succession of terraces with beds of flowers. In the clear sky of the middle night, the stars glitter restlessly. The moon is seen through the thick foliage of the trees. At intervals, the nightingale is heard as if preluding for a song. At the door of the castle stands Merlin ; with him, but seated on benches of stone, are Morgause le Fay, Elaine, and Enid. Merlin has been playing upon his harp, and rests lightly against it.

### MORGAUSE LE FAY

The star that we look for has not yet made its way above the horizon. Within the castle all is still; the mother waits for the event.

### MERLIN

I hear the voice of the wave; it cannot now be long. The life that thrills through the unresting waters rises more and more clearly into song ; the secret powers that are in the deeps of the sea seek for utterance, and their demand shall not be gain-said; the voices of the slender and fleeting ripples,

## CAPRICCIOS

the roar of the loftiest billow, the vast murmur that reaches from farthest shore to shore, climb into thought and word.

ELAINE

There seems a movement amid the flowers; their perfume reaches me more keenly than ever before; I feel that they answer the voices of the sea; I cannot tell what dreams are stirring in me; my hopes are awakened, I am sure, by the movements and odors of the flowers.

MERLIN

It is near the middle hour of the night.

ENID

The bird breaks the silence anew; the thin clouds gather in the deep dark skies; the song arises and falls; it will gain the height of its hope, and burst forth silvery and strong like the impassioned leap of a fountain in the moonlight.

MERLIN

The time has indeed arrived.

There is silence for a while. Then there are heard hurrying steps in the castle. The agitation within seems intense. A lady appears at the door. She speaks to Merlin.

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE LADY

The Queen lies white and pulseless. Her eyes are closed and she does not move. Is there no help in your wisdom ?

### MERLIN

The agony is not yet over, but the middle of the night approaches; at its height and crowning, the star will shine in the skies. In the morrow her joy will be at its full. Bear this to her; let the Queen drink from the vial. When it is emptied, let it be cast into the air from whence it came.

He holds up a vial that sends forth light as if it were a self-luminous star. The water within it is the source of the light. It is frail as though a touch might shatter it, and so akin to the air, that at any moment one might expect it to fade and vanish into that ether.

### MERLIN

Take it and fear not.

The lady takes the vial, that flashes in her hand with a sudden but continuous brilliance, and she bears it with her into the castle.

### MERLIN (*accompanying himself on his harp*)

The joy that bursts from the earth in flowers  
Flows through you, O great mother-life;  
The passion that glows in the light of stars

## CAPRICCIOS

Drink deep, O answering soul.  
The pulses that sweep through the flood of the  
world,  
The songs that are center of Time,  
Time, the up-climbing, are beating and surging  
Within you, sublime.  
Truths that the world importunate has longed for,  
Dreams that the eyes of great prophets have seen,  
God and mankind coalesced in one Beauty,  
Dwell in the chambers, the shrine of your soul.  
Under your heart you have known him, have borne  
him,  
Mother and lover and giver of breath;  
All that you are, and all that your thought is,  
Into his growth you will lavishly pour;  
Wherefore the Son of the World and the Heavens,  
Waking, embodied, long hoped for, shall come,  
Earth's Reconciler, while strife shudders round us,  
Builder of Beauty and builder of Song!

### MORGAUSE LE FAY

A faint pale light shines on the horizon above the  
water's edge. The sky there is one long stretch  
of dark. From the sea and the earth and heights  
of unscalable air, the molten flame quivers together  
and rounds into an orb of resplendent white. Lo!  
it is the star!

## CAPRICCIOS

ELAINE

Swiftly it rises up the steeps of heaven; its brothers welcome it in rapid rays of gladness; I seem to hear them singing together.

ENID

The moon rests upon the sea, white and pallid; she yields the reign over the earth and sky to the newcomer; he is more bright than day; to-morrow's sun will be his golden shade for such light is he that all his echoes are splendors.

MERLIN

The elder loveliness gives up its glory unto him even as the moon gives hers forever back unto the sun; the songs that have been nobly sung renew themselves transfigured in his nobler song.

ELAINE

Over the castle tower the white star stands amid the riot and the tumult of the dancing brotherhood of worlds. Fierce ecstasy sweeps through the earth as spring's young ardor through wild-pulsing veins. The hour has come.

MERLIN

The time is fully ripe. The earth receives high heaven; the rose of all the ages is about to bloom.

## CAPRICCIOS

### ENID

The flash and fury fall; the star sweeps down; I fear not the overcoming light; how strangely and swiftly it comes; it pauses over the old and mighty tower; can we sustain this radiance longer? Water, sky, flowers, the castle gray, glow like the gates of paradise ; and now it is gone, vanished within these walls, that hold miraculously the strange propitious visitor.

There is a sound of exultant music from within the castle. It swells and rises and then falls in enchanting cadence. The King, accompanied by knights and ladies, emerges from the great portal. The King approaches Merlin, about whom stand Morgause, Elaine, and Enid ; the rest, bearing torches, encircle them.

### THE KING

Unto us a child is born. The prophetic years have been brought to their close; the new era opens; the bringing together of all that is or may be in this great point of time has come to pass; the light of the ages shines, and the seas and the mountains and the sky shall glow fair with an effulgence as of flowers.

Throughout the remainder of the scene, the music within the castle makes as it were a pervasive atmosphere. Merlin strikes his harp continuously in a strange and heroic melody.



## CAPRICCIOS

### MERLIN

The uttermost ends of the earth shall hear him;  
His voice has the strength and rush of the planets;  
The sound of many waters lives in his singing;  
Rejoice and praise him.

### THE KING

What are thrones and crowns beside his utterance ?  
Power gives him her symbol and scepter;  
The earth hearkens his word and obeys it;  
Rejoice and praise him.

### THE KNIGHTS

We are come with strength to his service;  
We shall know the flash and glow of his eyebeams;  
We shall lift the spear and shield at his bidding;  
We rejoice and praise him.

### THE LADIES

Our thoughts and our dreams shall fashion his  
garments;  
Silk shall his robe be and golden;  
Fair shall he shine as the morning;  
We rejoice and we praise him.

### MORGAUSE LE FAY

What has the sky that he has not ?  
From the uttermost reach of the heavens,

## CAPRICCIOS

Night and light bring him offerings mighty;  
Rejoice and praise him.

ELAINE

Earth, springtime, and white-clad winter,  
Bring from your hearts your throbbing message,  
Blossoms, snowy or rose-red give him;  
Rejoice, rejoice and sing praises.

ENID

Winds that are soft as the growth of flowers,  
Storms that are wild as the throes of passion,  
Give unto him your wonderful secret;  
We, too, rejoice and praise him.

A VOICE FROM THE HEIGHTS OF HEAVEN

The splendor of Beauty is the face of Love;  
Lift your eyes that ye may see;  
Open your hearts that ye may hear;  
Rejoice, rejoice and praise him.

The music from the castle becomes predominant and enveloping, and absorbs into itself the melody of Merlin. The curtain falls.

## CAPRICCIOS

### II.

The castle and its gardens are aglow with the rich life of a morning in early summer. Merlin and Morgause le Fay are discovered with Arthur, who is now a boy about eight years old.

#### ARTHUR

I have brought these from the sea-shore. I have held others like them often in my hands, but these are prettier than any I have seen before. They have a soft and changing lustre all over them, and the pink within them fades into a white at the edges. The sea has made them with light clear waves and fingers, and with a touch like that my mother gives me as she stands beside me when I am falling asleep, and she kisses me, and then for a moment lays her hand against my cheek.

#### MERLIN

The sea has a strength that is more than tongue can speak; the fire in the center of the earth is not mightier; the fury of storms rushing across the black air is not swifter or more able to slay; but her slender ripples know how to fashion and bring to sight these strange and wondrous things, so frail and yet so fine that your small fingers will crush them if you are not wary and full of thought.

## CAPRICCIOS

ARTHUR

They are the flowers of the sea; even as the land bears blooms of many colors and forms, so does the sea bring forth its new and lovely growths. Also the air has its wonders; I watch the clouds as they speed by, and seem to know what message they wish to bring; and, at night, the stars in the deep darkness tell me of heights upon heights, and my dreams fleet beyond them all, and I touch a thought, not lighted up at first, but which slowly glows and shines with a glory that is more than all other flames or fires.

MORGAUSE LE FAY

It is the light at which all fires are lighted. Look at the race and riot of the golden flames across the unresting waters; could we but know them as they are, the secret of the sea would be told to us in a music sweeter than the touches which Merlin gives his harp under the silence of the woods, when he wanders there alone just after nightfall, and we listen to him in a trance of joy, until the melody dies away in the distance. Those sparks, tipping the unceasing waves, fall from the ever-giving sun; and sun gives to sun of its own fire and glow; and all of them receive what they have of splendor from that thought and dream of light wherein they live embosomed.

## CAPRICCIOS

MERLIN

Hold the shell to your ear, and listen to the low sound which comes from it.

ARTHUR

I know that music very well, and often have felt it slowly making its soft and winding way into my changing dreams.

MERLIN

Keep your ear close to the shell; closer, closer yet; let not one smallest circle of sound escape you.

ARTHUR

What would you have of me, good master? I am growing one with the faint and pale sweet tune.

MORGAUSE LE FAY

So must you ever be. Hold the shell closer, closer yet.

ARTHUR

Oh, now it comes. The great waters rush and flow and rush about me. The many winds sweep over them. The flowers of the garden and the castle walls fade into a gray dimness—and vanish. It is no longer to-day—it is a distant night, strange and deep and lampless. What is it that fleets through me?

## CAPRICCIOS

MERLIN

The shell is speaking to you; do not lose one murmur, one merest shade of sound.

ARTHUR

I am one with the current and yet it does not drown me; nay, it is all mine and yours; nay, it is all his, and ours through him.

MORGAUSE LE FAY

There is naught which shall not be yours, if you hold it as from him, and give back to him as meet for service.

ARTHUR

The melody dies now into a tenderer loveliness, and begins to fail and pass, like starlight behind the moving pines.

MERLIN

Do you heed its inmost carolling?

ARTHUR

Yea, master, as I gaze into those eyes of yours.

MERLIN

What mark you there?

ARTHUR

I see the mighty mist which clothes in dark that is



## CAPRICCIOS

neither night nor day the web of things; I see the waters surging all around me; I hear the first wild rush of many winds; the stars shine forth from out the veil; the mountains tower, and grasses clothe the rocks; and now I hear the voices of men and herds, and children singing when the golden sun climbs up the rosy, cloud-rejoicing sky. What more is there to come ?

The King and Queen enter from the portal of the castle. With them are Enid and Elaine. As they descend the steps, Morgause le Fay begins a chant, to which Merlin strikes his harp murmuringly.

MORGAUSE LE FAY

Golden in the mighty Heavens  
Dwells the fair God,  
Not unreachd of Desire,  
Not unclasped of the Soul.  
Through the vast and unplummeted spaces,  
Through the rush and roll of the ages,  
The heave and the toil of the mountains,  
The rising and falling of waters,  
The soft sweet step of the grasses,  
The deep-hued flood of the flowers,  
The torment and struggle of races,  
The splendor of calm-voiced peace,  
Forward unresting has moved the Purpose,

## CAPRICCIOS

The Voice and the Dream of God.  
Not lost in the light's seclusion,  
Not high in a noble estrangement,  
Not circled by clouds and hidden,  
But toiling here with sweet labor,  
Awake in all hope and pure longing,  
Building the storm into calmness,  
Moulding the world like a blossom,  
Love, the sweet God of all God-head,  
Murmurs around and within us.  
Closelier hold the sea-shell,  
Deeplier know its glad message,  
Picture and song and statue and temple  
See arising before you,  
Telling the latter-day story,  
That the darkling days and the hours,  
That sad defeat and fierce struggle,  
That pitiful pain and its horror,  
Hold a marvelous mystery,  
Give way to a mighty joyance,  
Serve the divine and holy,  
Fade in the glory and shine everlasting.

ARTHUR

See, father, the wonderful shells, and I know now  
what the voice in them sings in the deeps of my  
heart.

## CAPRICCIOS

MERLIN

The sea and the sky and the air have been speaking to him.

THE KING (*touching his sword*)

That is well. Child, place your little hand upon the hilt.

Arthur steps forward, and the sword-hilt glitters resplendent with its multitude of jewels. He places his tiny fingers upon it, and smiles up into the King's face.

THE KING

It is thus that another and stranger story thrills through you. Do you listen well?

ARTHUR

My soul obeys you, my father.

THE KING

Afar off out of the mist they come in long line and wandering movement. Their feet are hurt by the toilsome ascent, and the roar of many storms is in their ears. The darkness hovers in their eyes, and they raise their savage hands to hurl and to batter and to strike.

ARTHUR

But here, O my father, is a lovely, hill-encircled glen. Blue is the gentle sky above it, and soft are

## CAPRICCIOS

the winds that blow around it. Silvery-leaved are the trees, and the soft gray fruit shows amid the foliage. White winds the road to the sea-shore. Noble are the men who make their home here. Along the fair street the white statues shine like the gods themselves; out yonder do these sit on their mountain tops, serene beside their gold tables. There on the rock stands the white marvel of the ages, the goddess fronting the sea, friend and protectress. Mother of Beauty and Charm and Splendor, you do I feel pouring your life into my life-blood.

### THE KING

Yet the march does not pause there. Do you hear the song that crashes through the stirring tree-tops, soaring above them, and striking against the very sun ?

### ARTHUR

Aye, father; I see the fair-haired march of the conquerors; the lofty-browed prophetess leads them and guides; no mountains, nor seas, can withstand them; forth from the regions of stern-visaged winter they come, and warmer lands know their footsteps. Marvelous are the works which they rear; many-spired, like the waving tops of the forest, arise the shrines wherein dwells the God-head; and, oh, the wonder of the walls and the

## CAPRICCIOS

ceilings ; fire and color and passion burst there into joyance, that is the very heart of the heavens; and through the long aisles, and billowing into the mighty arch, sweeps the sea of the song, that is Love's own secret and body.

THE QUEEN

Know you that mystery ?

ARTHUR

Mother, I look deep into your eyes.

THE QUEEN

Wonderfully came that child into this world of ours; short were the years of his travail and bitter; yet not one verge of the world shall feel not the strength of the word that fell from his lips.

ARTHUR

I dare not allow the vision to speed forth on the flow of my breath. The light around me is golden; life is fair in the rays that pierce through it; grander and purer and nobler it all becomes; it shines with one Beauty; there above in the Heavens, and here in the myriad on myriad worlds that send it back to its source—Beauty in answer to Beauty, golden Life in answer to Life yet more golden.

## CAPRICCIOS

ENID

They join their hands in the dance,  
Painting and Sculpture and Music;  
Wondrous the pathos and flow,  
Lovely the fate yet to be.

ELAINE

Who shall follow the footsteps of Love ?  
We may not fathom his secrets;  
From height unto height he leads,  
From glory to glory he moves.

ARTHUR

I know him shrined in my heart,  
In me resounds his sweet singing,  
Lo ! the world shall know him through me,  
Poetry's son and servant of Beauty.

The Queen kneels beside the Prince. He throws his arm about her neck, and lays his cheek against hers. The curtain falls.

## CAPRICCIOS

### III.

Another and grander portal of the castle ; a broad roadway leads down to the sea-shore ; on either side vast lawns with deepening forests at their edges and outskirts ; along the roadway a double concourse of knights in holiday array ; beyond them towards the sea-shore a throng of people full of rejoicing ; the palace steps are crowded with ladies ; near the portal the King and Queen and Merlin ; just below them Morgause le Fay, Enid, and Elaine. The harbor shows many ships with floating pennons ; sailors are seen running to and fro amid the populace.

CHILDREN (*approaching, and bearing great bunches of roses*)

It is the time of full-orbed flowers ; it is the latter spring of the year ; now the earth and the sky smile gladly towards each other ; the softly colored seas encircle the land with arms of love.

SECOND GROUP OF CHILDREN (*approaching, and bearing large, white, and perfume-exhaling lilies*)

Never has the sunshine been purer or serener ; the air and the light vie in clearness one with the other ; stainlessly the heights of the heavens scale the clear ether ; bright are the song and the mirth and the glow of the world.

THIRD GROUP OF CHILDREN (*approaching, and bearing long grasses and blossoms, that cling to vines whose life is close to the moist and odorous soil*)



## CAPRICCIOS

The humbler ones shall be exalted; those whose heads have been bowed down shall know what it is to be bathed in the glory of sunshine; blossoms that hide in the depths of the forest shall see the full-stretched blueness above them.

FOURTH GROUP OF CHILDREN (*approaching, and bearing palm branches and laurel*)

The victory stands at the gates of life. The song peals from far over sea and the waters rejoice to hear it; the mountains and deeps of the air send forth their gladsome voices; the sound of the music of Time is heard in its splendor at last; all things that grow, all life that breathes, all hearts that burn, unite in the pure delight, that is the loveliest of days, the end for which all hope was, the fire that makes everything new.

MERLIN

The marriage of the soul and the world is thus brought to pass; from the island washed by the lispings waves the bridegroom bringeth her; there she dwelt beside her mountain lake, that knew the passage of the suns and the flight of the stars; all the winds came to her, freighted with messages that she fathomed; in the solemn midnights she heard what the life-blood of the world murmured as it came from the great world-heart; the Lady of the



## CAPRICCIOS

Mere weds with the Ruler of Time; the Muses rejoice in the bridals; the Light of Song arises above the horizon again; the Poet becomes the monarch and master and king.

### THE KNIGHTS

We have worn our armor and wielded our swords; we have stood in the fore-front of the fight; we have known the terror and the joy of battle; we have heard the mad shouts of onset, and seen the flashings of steel like noonday stars across the rush of contest; through the crash and the clamor, we have heard the notes of the trumpet like a blood-red light amid a dance of lesser lights; defeat and victory both have we felt; but now we bend before a grander conqueror; what we have toiled for appears now unto us; the reign of peace and friendship and loveliness.

### THE LADIES

Often have we sat beside our casements and seen the sun falling behind the glooming skies, and bearing away from the quieted waters the long and wavering bands of crimson and gold; we have seen the stars silently rising from out the growing darkness, and watched their serene march around the world; strange dreams and longings moved through

## CAPRICCIOS

the spaces of our souls; we thought of the warriors for God and the Right in distant lands; we thought of the tumults that engirt our land and threatened to break upon its calm; we cleansed our souls and made our hearts pure that our lives might be as a blessing; we saw the great good that was coming like a festal chariot bearing the victor; we heard already the music of peace and chaste glory; now we await the consummation, the Lady who is the light of our seeing, the strength of our strivings, the flawless voice of our singing, the secret and heart of our musings.

### THE PEOPLE

We have stood at the foot of the mountain; we have seen the cavalcade winding upwards, and catching the light while we were in darkness; we have heard the flap of the banners from the castle roof; we have dwelt in our farmsteads and stood by our forges, and have toiled without ceasing through the hours of the daytime; we have eaten our coarse black bread with tears oftentimes, and our children have wept at our knees; yet we have not fallen into repining, but have fanned the flame of hope that burned in our hearts, sometimes smouldering and covered with ashes, but bursting anew with red resplendence; we have

## CAPRICCIOS

raised our unmailed hand in the unequal fight, and have mourned over our many defeats; to-day the sun rises anew upon our horizon; the kingdom shall be, where each man is king, and each woman is queen; all men shall toil, each after his fashion, and all toil shall be good and equal; so shall our life grow even and kindly and beneficent; so shall the work of the world be done in the spirit of love, mighty and royal; so shall all life unite in the whole that is Joyance and Beauty.

### THE SAILORS

Over the waves tender and treacherous, we have come; we have no fear of the outland places; where the step of the wanderers has never been, we shall find new lands for our King's adornment; into the remotest recesses we wind our long and sure way; we watch for the new stars in the heavens; we see the new streams falling in foam-wreathed cataract on cataract to the sea; against the sunset we see strange tall trees rearing their crowns of foliage; we hear the hiss of the jungled snake that knows not the newcomers, and we fear not; so shall the whole sphere be bound in the chains that are freedom, bound with the love that is in the eyes of the queen who cometh, fettered and mastered and won to the worship which brings all space to its altars.

## CAPRICCIOS

ELAINE

They come—the Bride and the Bridegroom.

ENID

Strew flowers on the path of their coming.

MORGAUSE LE FAY

Raise the song and the shout of welcome.

Arthur and the Lady of the Mere are discovered riding slowly to the palace steps. On either side of them ride an aged knight and lady, and behind them the flower of the realm, young men and women in long array. Arthur bears in his hand a sword wreathed with flowers, and the Lady of the Mere, whose beauty, shining beneath the masses of golden hair, surpasses that of earthly women, carries a tall sceptral flower, manifold as the greatest of roses, and silver and perfumed as the most sacred of lilies. She is clothed in white that flashes back to the sunlight like waters that rejoice in the midday radiance. She is coronetted, and her deep blue eyes have the mystery and profundity of skies that are untroubled of clouds, and watch responsively over the unfathomable quiescent seas. As Arthur and the Lady ride between the golden ranks, flowers and palms are cast before them. The shouts of welcome encircle them as they pass; the mighty organ sends forth its thunder-peals of rapturous music from the castle; and the harp-song of Merlin, like a vast bird skimming the waters, sweeps in large and marvelous loveliness over the luminous and heaving expanse of sound.

CHORUS (*from the Castle*)

Welcome her, farmstead, welcome her, street,

## CAPRICCIOS

Welcome her, sound of martial feet;  
Welcome her, maiden, with morning song,  
Welcome her, great rejoicing throng;  
Star of her island she long has dwelt,  
Joy of her forest she long has felt;  
There, by the magical marge of her mere,  
She has seen all shapes of the night appear,  
Shapes of the night and shapes of the day,  
Rising along the future's way;  
Wonders and dreams have woven a spell  
Around the green and gold of her dell;  
And the chief glory has risen to slay  
Monsters of eld that held at bay  
What the long ages have striven for;  
Mistress of all, and servitor  
Of the high splendor that makes its home  
Midmost of God's over-arching dome,  
Bringing the weeds that hope shall wear  
Till it glows forth most noble and fair,  
Spouse of the soul that pours its light  
Over the land, serene and bright,  
All this region of mystery and wonder  
Bids you welcome with joyous thunder,  
Welcomes you, wings of Thought that flies  
Gold-clad forth to its mother-skies!

MERLIN

How have I watched and waited for this hour!

## CAPRICCIOS

How have I longed to see the sun of this day arise most golden in the eastern skies! My labors are nearly over, and I may return to the deeps of my forest afar in my native land. Welcome, my prince, and fairest of women!

### THE KING

You are to set your hand upon a plough that shall break up a ground, wherefrom shall spring blossoms lovelier than any the eyes of Time have yet seen. I stood in the front of battle; around me I heard the clash of steel, and ringing of onset, and the snapping of spears; about me I heard the whistle of weapons dividing the air; I knew the groans of the dying, and the poignant cries of victory. I have prepared for you, O Son, and Lady, clothed with the softest of sunlights, the peace and calm, which the birth of Beauty is fain of. This Kingdom greets you; gird it with gold of your patience, and make it a resplendent vision of that which must be forever.

### THE QUEEN

Son, that I felt under the passionate beat of my heart, and daughter that my dreams elected there far in your green-hued seclusion of forest and waters, through you shall pour the love that has been my portion in this pageant of living. Mould



## CAPRICCIOS

it to shapes nobler than those of the blessed afore-time ; crown it with garlands fresh from our woodlands; make it as if its inmost fancies and aspirations stepped forth into light for all men's seeing to music—a song down-dropped from the secret heavens.

ARTHUR

What I am, I give to you, fitted for your endeavors; joyance and suffering, hopes that scale the sun-clad mountains, dreams that enclose the world in their purpose and passion, lit at the flame of your toils and your seeking, all the breath of my life at its highest, weave together the end that I know yet dimly, but take from your hands to make it a power for the healing of Time, and the Truth's resurrection.

THE LADY OF THE MERE

As one gazes into a deep crystal set on an altar's seclusion, softly ashine from a lamp that burns without ceasing, and sees there one by one shapes speeding in mystic procession, I have sat in my boat in the midst of my lake, when the solemn midnight arose above me, circle on circle of stars and fathomless heights beyond them, and watched the gracious Fate blending its hues for me in the

## CAPRICCIOS

rippleless waters, foreknew my husband, limned forth in that mirror, divined the large intent that makes me its joyous helper and handmaid. I come to bring the secret of love to sight, and make it blaze like a pulsing star down the path of the ages.

ALL (*Knights, Ladies, Populace, Sailors*)

Closely are you held to our hearts, that give you the warmth, the strength of all their motions for your behoof and service.

The Prince and the Lady of the Mere alight, and follow the King and Queen into the Castle. The curtain falls to the sound of rich and wondrous music.

### IV.

Several years have elapsed. The King and Queen have passed beyond these voices into the peace that holds the spirit of all music in its silences. The scene presents the great Hall of Audience in the Castle. Arthur enthroned, with the Lady of the Mere beside him. Merlin is seated just below the throne, and his deep eyes glow with unwonted intensity beneath the shadow of his long and heavy white hair. He seems to master the feebleness of body, which comes with great age, by a strength of soul, that makes of obstacles as little as a great storm wave beating with assistant winds a helpless vessel against titanic rocks of a shore, that knows neither pity nor relenting. On either side of the dais a concourse of knights



## CAPRICCIOS

and ladies. The great pillars that support the groined roof are wreathed with masses of flowers. The sunlight pours through the painted windows. The ceiling, flooded with light, shows clearly the outlines of a composition, evidently not yet complete, and strangely suggestive, as if now, even this very moment, it would burst into full sight, like a great chorus at the command of the leader. Before the dais stands a youth, flower-crowned and clad in white, holding a lyre in his hand. The Lady of the Mere bends listening towards him, her gentle face, and gracious eyes, irradiant with a fervor of life, that seems able to dower with its own courage and vigor an unending array of weaker hearts, even as a self-luminous sun gives to its many satellites of its unstinting stores and feels forever enriched in its copious outpourings. Her voice, brilliant as starshine and full of changing lights and shadows like the myriad mystical overtones in a heavenly orchestra, a marvelous wealth of reminiscences and prophecies, subdues to itself the fire and color and passion of the great pageant.

### THE LADY OF THE MERE

Without is the sweet, early burst of the spring-time,

Deeper and greener the grasses uprise;  
The tremulous flowers peep out of their coverts,  
And placid as glass lies the blue of the sea.  
Faintly the warm winds are playing and gladdening,  
The pallid new buds are scaling the branches  
Where birds, silver-throated, sing songs of return.  
Now that the winter is dead and the wailing,  
We, too, would kindle our souls at the flame,—

## CAPRICCIOS

Hearth-flame that burns in the midst of the spirit,—  
Whence our rapt lives take passion and purpose,  
Fire of gladness and splendor of joy.  
What do you bring us of offering due,  
Radiant youth, as fair as the dawn that flushes  
All the pure sky over mountainous steeps,  
When the young year dances down to the valleys  
From the dim heights where her footfall begins,  
Whence the last snow fleets in gold-netted runlets,  
And the first colors of life and delight  
Follow that dancing wherever it leads ?

### THE YOUTH

A pageant behold that tells the story  
Of your height of giving and wonder,  
Which have brought to our kingdom of marvels  
All that we sought and now have attained.  
Arthur, our King, our helper and leader,  
Girt in the garments of your fair fashioning,  
Shows forth the mystic and mingled glory  
Which takes from you its golden completeness.  
Lo! the light that the ages have longed for,  
Lo! the joy that the weary years have called for,  
Lo! the Beauty that is Time's best miracle,  
Flower, uniting the glow and fire of all passion,  
Noble beyond all thought that we had of its  
brightness,

## CAPRICCIOS

Shines the center and heart of your rule.  
So I bear at this birth of the springtime  
A semblance pale of that high achievement;  
Bid me raise my song of enchantment,  
Drawing the veil from our golden pageant.

ARTHUR

Sing the song which we hear with gladness.

THE YOUTH (*striking the lyre as he speaks*)

Rise from your primeval mists,  
Songs whereto the rapt heart lists;  
Burst the shadows where you dwell,  
Shapes that answer to my spell;  
Weave the mystic, golden dance  
On your floor of dream and trance;  
What has wrought within us still,  
What has nerved our secret will,  
What has been the World's Desire,  
Mixed of Earth's and Spirit's Fire,  
Deepening Light and truer Glory,  
Ever surer, tenderer story,  
With the art which is your dower,  
Show in all its wondrous power.  
Rise upon our gladdening sight  
Dreams that are the Light of Light,  
And the secret of the Night!

## CAPRICCIOS

As he speaks, he passes forward through the press of knights and ladies, who divide before him. He pauses, and a luminous mist seems to arise at his bidding. He enters it and disappears. Gradually the mist vanishes, and there is seen a vast plain with huge stones arranged in a circle at its center. The arrangement consists, at more or less regular intervals, of two tall stones with a horizontal one above them. Inside the circle the stones are scattered over the space. The plain is bounded by dense forests. The early gray of the morning is in the sky. Suddenly from the forests with wild cries a horde of men and women, clad in skins, and wearing strange ornaments on their heads and arms, sweep forward, and engage in a savage and uncouth dance. A woman of middle age, and with a mien of weird and fierce dignity, at length emerges from the whirl, and raises both hands to the sky. They gather around her in a restless group, and a man, younger than she, his head crowned with a fantastic garland of leaves, approaches her. About him assembles a body of old men, in long dark robes, and with white beards matching their masses of wild gray hair crowning their heads.

### THE PROPHETESS

Here is the plain and now is the hour;  
The sun will rise late upon this day;  
The work must be far forth to greet him;  
Golden must he shine over the mid-altar.

### THE CHIEF

Long upon the work have we pondered;  
We have watched the stars in their pallid courses;

## CAPRICCIOS

We have seen the moon poise above the plain;  
Now we are come to complete the great temple.

THE PROPHETESS (*as she raises her voice, the tribe  
gather around her*)

Forth unto the labor before the sunrise,  
Take ye the massive rocks and arrange them,  
Place them around the mighty altar,  
Finish the strange and mystic circle.

She makes an imperious gesture, and all, both men and women, fall to the task. They sweep into the circle, take up the larger rocks, and form a high and rugged altar in the center; they then rapidly place the remaining stones about it in several rounds of single upright ones; fronting the north-east they make a rude gateway. The first yellow and red glow of the sunrise shows in the heavens.

THE CHIEF

We have fulfilled the high commandments.  
Long have we waited for this hour;  
We paused in many dank, deep forests  
On the rude waters' farther side;  
We wandered under changing stars,  
The prophets still sat moody and silent;  
Then did we come to the lone island,  
Then the great voice fell from the heavens,  
Bidding us find the plain appointed;  
Here has the work been done and finished,

## CAPRICCIOS

This is the place and the hour we sought for ;  
Yet do we need the man and victim.

ALL

Yet do we need the man and victim.

THE PROPHETESS

Forests wherein the unpierced darkness  
Tells through the night and the green daytime  
Secrets that come from the abysses,  
Skies wherethrough the lights move ever,  
Suns that are masters, kings, and rulers,  
Make now complete our rugged temple,  
Send us at once the man and victim.

ALL

Send us at once the man and victim.

THE CHIEF

Lo! I come prepared to suffer.

THE PROPHETESS

Not yet, O shepherd of the people;  
Who takes this deed in strength upon him ?

She gazes fiercely around upon the tribe. A terrible silence falls over them ; the sunrise begins to glow in the eastern skies. Suddenly a strange sweet chant is heard. They turn, and the youth with the lyre, beautiful as the morning, emerges from the woods and comes quickly towards them.

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE YOUTH

I am the sight within your seeing,  
I am the breath within your being;  
With the sun, lo! I appear,  
Crowning the search of many a year;  
Long has Beauty thrilled and sought you,  
Know the Deed her joy has wrought you!

They open before him. He leaps upon the great altar.  
They surround it, uttering wild cries, and making strange  
gestures. The prophetess and the chief fall upon their knees.  
The sun, now fully arisen, appears behind him, as a great  
sphere of fire, and he stands in the very center of the over-  
powering radiance.

### THE PROPHETESS

O desire of the lengthened weary years!

### THE CHIEF

O wondrous end and attainment!

### ALL

We dare not slay you, O pure Splendor.

### THE YOUTH

Life, not Death, is Beauty's meaning;  
From Heaven's ramparts God is leaning;  
Rest and be content with knowing  
What fair fruits come of my sowing;



## CAPRICCIOS

Noble though the pile, yet blander  
Works the days shall bring, and grander.

In the vast sweep of the sunlight, the assemblage of stones with the youth at its heart assumes a new symmetry and glory. The tribe are amazed at its loveliness. The light becomes a very blaze, and the youth vanishes in it, the music of his chant being heard after he is no longer seen. The prayers and cries of the tribe continue; the mist again arises, and the whole scene is gathered back into it.

### A VOICE

Like a yellow windswept fire  
Higher leaps the strong desire;  
Filled with a divine unrest  
Heaves the world's impetuous breast;  
Clearer glow the dream and thought  
Into nobler semblance wrought;  
By the midland deep blue sea  
Shines a purer ecstasy;  
Under warmer, calmer skies  
Nobler shapes of glory rise.

The mist disappears; a reach of sea, slender-rippled as if touched by a light wind, and reflecting a stainless ether. The low hills, olive-crowned, arise on either side of the land-locked bay. The harbor is filled with a busy multitude at various tasks. A large and stately galley has just arrived. The master of the vessel is at point of coming ashore and has with him a body of sailors. The people gather about him and



## CAPRICCIOS

greet him with eagerness. The Priest of Apollo emerges from the crowd and speaks to him.

PRIEST OF APOLLO

Welcome, O mariner, come from the far town  
whence we

Sailed in the days not yet lost in the dim sweet  
past.

Always our hearts reach back to the land of our  
birth,

And we behold again the long and statued street,  
The gentle vine-clad hills and the white temple's  
star

Shining, miraculous flame, back to the sun's fierce  
fire

All the unclouded day from the sea-gazing height.

THE SHIPMAN

Smooth have the waters been, and fair the winds  
have blown,

And Artemis given her light through the reign of  
the dark.

Not a swift child of Ocean but has breathed a  
spell

Of azure calm about our ship's light-cleaving path.

PRIEST OF APOLLO

What of the burden you went forth to bring to us ?

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE SHIPMAN

Fair shone the sun, and glad and eager they were  
come

Down to the vessel's side, when we drew near the  
quay.

Into the roomy town we were led with clear song,  
And there we sat at feast while the day sped away.  
Through the large-starrèd night we heard the tales  
of eld,

And sleep came late to eyes that joyed in sights of  
home.

When the gold morning rose, we set forth to the  
shore,

And there the gift was placed, pure in the rosy  
light.

### PRIEST OF APOLLO

Take it up now with care, and bear unto the house  
Where it will stand, protecting life of all the land,  
A gift most high from those who ever love us well.

The sailors pass back into the ship and bring forth the statue. They step lightly with their burden, and led by the priest, move toward the town. The mist again covers the scene ; when it is cloven apart, there comes into view the interior of a noble temple ; the statue of Apollo, serene and beneficent, shines from its pedestal ; the priest and his assistants stand before it ; the temple is thronged with worshippers.

## CAPRICCIOS

PRIEST OF APOLLO

Lord of the silver bow,  
Master of joy and light,  
Slaying with arrows keen  
Shapes that haunt the night,  
Grant us your life to know,  
Make all our hearts serene  
With the pure dreams that flit  
Through your great soul enlivening it.  
Mould us fair to your might,  
Lay your hand on the land,  
Send your effluence bright  
In a golden rain and bland,  
So that your eyes, when they fall  
On harbor or street or hill,  
Shall see the glow of your will  
In shapes that allure and thrall.  
Make us the child of your love,  
Lead us to be your thought,  
Pure as yourself above  
Be your image bodied and wrought.  
As in the days of eld  
Your strength the Python slew,  
And horror no longer held  
The fields most sweet to view,  
Drive from our homes and us  
All that is not amorous

## CAPRICCIOS

Of the noble life that pours  
From you through our happy shores,  
So that here complete  
Your worship and love shall be,  
And glad the dance of your feet  
Beside our summer sea.

The mist again hides everything from the view ; it fades, and one sees a wide street with superb palaces on either hand ; the houses are gaily decorated, and the balconies and windows are filled with gazers ; the street also is lined with spectators eagerly waiting for the procession.

A YOUNG MAN

I seem to feel them coming ; hark ! the shouts ;  
They cannot now be far away.

A WOMAN

You dream ;

These noises are made here by standers near.

A BOY (*from the middle of the street*)

There, I can see them ; now they come, they come !

AN OLD MAN

It is a grand and festal day ; the sky  
Seems to rejoice with us, and well it may ;  
What can be juster than to leave our toils,  
Our little cares, and pay our homage due  
To the great artist who now makes his home  
Within our city ?

## CAPRICCIOS

A WOMAN

Just indeed it is;  
To love the high, the nobly beautiful,  
Makes us akin to them; and so our lords  
Grant us this day to see his latest work,  
And let him feel how much we honor him.

The procession appears; it is composed of the city's governors, young members of the nobility, representatives of the various trades and guilds, the artists of all kinds at the last. Amid them is borne a great picture showing the mother with the child, and beside it passes the painter, with head uncovered, and receiving the unstinted homage of his fellow-citizens. He is richly garbed in the costume of the time, but his face is that of the youth, who has appeared in the preceding scenes. During the shouts the cloud again covers all from the sight.

A VOICE

Age after age my labors shine,  
Wrought into marvels subtly fine;  
In varied ways is the story told,  
In purest white or ruddy gold;  
Yet such its depth and lustrous charm,  
Its exorcism of every harm,  
Its revelations of glories new,  
Fruitions not yet brought to view,  
That still your inmost hearts must yearn  
The further beauty to discern.

## CAPRICCIOS

The shifting curtain slowly begins to stir and lift, veil by veil. The vista disclosed seems illimitable. Once more the light-gladdened sea, and the gracious hills. On terrace after terrace overlooking the waters, amid their gardens, are seen white palaces ; along the middle plain stretches of lofty trees, under which are noble dwellings ; in the center a green level with a great group of statuary ; the sea is full of fair-shaped craft flying a multiplicity of pennons ; through openings in the hills the roads give glimpses into a land smiling and making perpetual holiday. The white-robed chorus surrounds the youth ; they are clad in loose-falling draperies. The swell and harmony of an unseen orchestra is heard all about them.

### THE YOUTH

Joy! Joy!

Whithersoever we turn,  
The golden raptures burn ;  
The regions of the air  
One passionate message bear,  
Light, Joyance, Splendor everywhere.

### THE CHORUS

Love has made his home on earth ;  
Beauty everywhere has birth ;  
Poetry close wed to song  
Tells what joys to all belong.

### THE YOUTH

Bind them in a flower-knit chain,

## CAPRICCIOS

Bid each bring to all the gain,  
Hero in his marble dress,  
Painting's myriad blessedness,  
Temple crowning every hill,  
Words whose pauses ever fill  
Music's mystic trance and thrill,  
Make them all display to man  
Nobly as they only can  
What his truest life must be,  
Worship, Freedom, Ecstasy.

### A VOICE

In the many rippled flow  
Of my magic you shall know  
What the deepest heart of things  
To itself forever sings;  
In the ages past and gone  
Splendors led the nations on;  
Sovereign of the latter years,  
Music its fair towers uprears;  
Deeps unfathomed, realms untrod,  
Visions of the mighty God,  
Passion's sweep and Love's unrest,  
Search for what is pure and best,  
Blisses dimly felt before,  
Dreams the spirit must adore,  
Rise and glow and strangely gleam

## CAPRICCIOS

In my ever-moving stream;  
Sovereign of these latter years,  
Music its fair towers uprears.

### ANOTHER VOICE

Each is king who serves the rest,  
He who loves most is the best;  
Clearly glows the wondrous truth  
In my golden changeless youth;  
Long ago the chant arose  
Of man's joys and fleeting woes;  
Temples grew at my just beck;  
Sculptures shone my house to deck;  
Painting gave herself to me,  
Helper of high Poetry;  
Music lends her sunbright trance  
My achievement to advance;  
Every thought embathed in me  
Gains a surer empery;  
Now all life is seen at last  
Woven of my gracious past;  
Now all life is seen to win  
What my soul has ever been;  
Lady of the forest mere,  
Arthur whom we reverence here,  
Lo! ye are what all must be,  
Heaven-illuminated Poetry.



## CAPRICCIOS

### THE CHORUS

Let the music rise and fall  
Into joyance over all;  
Bring the message round, complete,  
Into every home and street.  
Know the might of love supreme,  
Source of every changing dream,  
Who has brought you where you may  
Dwell within his golden day.

The scene like the others is covered with the white cloud ;  
the music, however, continues.

### ARTHUR

Forth now into the wildwood ; there to think  
And dream upon what here was told to us ;  
Come, O my queen, I fain would clearly hear  
What now I see down in your deepened eyes.

Arthur and the Lady of the Mere descend from the thrones ;  
they pass, followed by the courtiers ; the music does not cease  
until the curtain falls.

## CAPRICCIOS

### V.

It is a night of cloud ; the moon is seen intermittently emerging from the dense black vapors ; occasionally a star flickers faintly and feebly. The wide sea is slightly roughened by the wind ; it is at intervals silvered by the moon's appearances. Near the shore is erected a bier ; on which, covered by a heavy pall, lies the body of Arthur. The high and serene face is noble ; at one side stands Merlin, bent and weary ; opposite him in black draperies, Elaine, Enid, and Morgause le Fay ; in front, looking seawards, the Lady of the Mere. Torch-bearers surround the bier and the personages.

#### THE LADY OF THE MERE

Do I not hear a distant singing on the waters ?  
As I strain my gaze, I seem to see the great barge  
coming toward us.

#### MERLIN

It cannot now be long. Midnight holds the  
heavens, and before the morning shows its gray  
light above the waves, he must be far on his way.

#### THE LADY OF THE MERE

I too must then return to my lone island, and my  
lake, gleaming beneath my mountains. The cycle  
of this toil is past and done.

#### ELAINE

Another round in the great ladder has been  
climbed ; another outlook has been gained ; all

## CAPRICCIOS

men have seen the world in a more gracious light,  
and heard the cadence of a finer song.

### ENID

Arthur, our king, lies here asleep; the dream of  
his great life has come to light in many ways of  
blessedness. Now he shall know the happiness  
of rest and calm.

### MORGAUSE LE FAY

Great is the delight of noble work done with glad  
help of our strong fellow-men.

Great is the delight of seeing noble ends achieved  
and wrought; but sleep has also balm for weary  
eyes.

### THE LADY OF THE MERE

Surely I hear aright; the faint song quivers down  
the silvering sea; the light grows brighter in the  
stormy heavens; or does my heart mock me with  
fancies shimmering before deceived eyes?

### MERLIN

Nay, you have seen and heard; I also feel the  
plash of the dark waters, and I too shall fare forth  
to the vale of rest. The winds are breathing  
more deeply, and the sail is rounded towards us.

## CAPRICCIOS

A low and mystic chant is borne towards them across the waters. The sound of dividing waves is dimly heard, and afar off a dusky sail comes into view.

### THE LADY OF THE MERE

What have your hand and heart not wrought, great soul, for whom the distant heavens are opening? There the life, that has burned down into its socket here, will spring anew, awakened by the winds of a divinest spring. Your eyes will turn unto a clearer scene, and stronger currents flow from your strong heart, restored and whole from many wounds and pangs.

### ELAINE

Who knows not suffering, knows not song.

### ENID

Who feels not woe, can raise no silver chant.

### MORGAUSE LE FAY

The fiery soul, feeling the stream of life fleeting adown its veins, touches grief with its own pure might, and builds a dream of bliss even from stress and agony. The house of life is filled with songs of reconciling cheer.

The chant upon the waters becomes ever distincter, and the barge with its dark sails is clearly before them. In it already appear three crowned figures, stoled in black, and with faces turned towards the shore.

## CAPRICCIOS

MERLIN

We fare forth together, O my King; ever have I been beside you, as a vassal obedient to your will; my hand has done for you what it had might to do, and what you craved of it; my thought has told its tale into your ear for your acceptance; they have called me wise, but what great skill of fathoming mysteries had I save that your eyes gazed through my strengthened ones ?

THE LADY OF THE MERE

I laid my hand in yours, O King; I brought you furtherance from my island home; I had caught glimpses of the sea, and far-off shinings of the stars, and palest echoes from the deepest woods, and bird-cries answering to the early sun, that they might be clear threads within the web you spun; so shall I still be mixed with you, and in your work my slender help will front the newer hours.

ELAINE

Farewell, sweet master and good lord.

ENID

How long until your dear head shall return ?

MORGAUSE LE FAY

The morrow's sun will look upon a barren land.

## CAPRICCIOS

The Lady of the Mere walks slowly to the shore. The black barge comes now to rest. The song rises against the heavens, clear and thrilling. The light in the sky is soft and pervasive. The singing gradually fades away.

MERLIN

Lift the body gently and bear it hither.

The attendants take the body tenderly from the bier and carry it to the barge. The three queens receive it and then make room for Merlin, who ascends the boat, and stands beside it.

THE LADY OF THE MERE

Already the slumberous calm that pervades my island takes hold of me. O Arthur, husband and king, I gave you what I had, and now I give you back unto the mystery from whence you sprung. Healing will come, and strength, and desire, and, at your voice, which cleaves all space, I will again live for you, even as your larger hopes shall require.

MERLIN

He is not dead; how vainly men deem of death! He has gone forth into the very winds, and not a pulse but bears him in fluttering strength; the night through all her stars and clouds feels him at heart; the busy streets know his clear voice resounding through their toils; and every dream that climbs the unscaled heavens has him within it; still

## CAPRICCIOS

he passes; but the years that are as yet unclamorous for the breaking of their prison will know the spell that shatters his sleep, and he will rise again. So I fare forth with him. I have wrought through the weary day, and I would fain have calm with him, which will be granted me, I know, upon that shore which now awaits us both. And you see that you falter not, but labor while the clear hours hold, and make the garden fresh with the remembered flowers. Then, at the close, you too shall find us in our distant vale, and on you shall his eyes shine anew. And now, O Lady of the Mere, fare forth, and be all ready for his hand and kiss, when you shall hold him to your heart once more.

The singing again severs the air. The watchers on the shore see the boat growing more and more a speck in the distance, and hear the singing more and more as a faint thread of sound falling from the horizon. At last a soft glow appears very far off; they seem to behold Arthur standing erect in the boat and turning a benignant brow upon them. Then all is dark and silent.

### THE LADY OF THE MERE

This day is over.

### MORGAUSE LE FAY

Nay, its labors now become more tense and strong.

## CAPRICCIOS

THE LADY OF THE MERE

We toil for the newer and the nobler one.

The curtain falls.



ON THE MOUNTAIN TOP

FAUST

MEPHISTOPHELES

RAPHAEL



The scene presents the rugged and barren summit of a mountain in the gray light of the early morning. Below, the heavy mists slowly move, as with an inner impulse, like awakening thoughts in a mind that has been dulled by an overcoming shock. Beyond, toward the eastern horizon, a lake lies cold and steely-dusk under the unlit skies. To the west, a mountain pass, and through it glimpses of a wide-stretching upland emerald with grass and fair-shaped trees in the semi-light overhanging all. Rounding a sharp curve of rock, and climbing the precipitous ascent, Faust and Mephistopheles come into view, the former wearied and without interest, the latter gay with the mocking triumph that feeds upon the discomfiture of his victim.

FAUST

What new and senseless prank is this that you are playing now? What have I to do with all this childishness on the barren summit, where what I see I care not for at all?

MEPHISTOPHELES

When will you let yourself be indeed freed from the last of illusions? You yet so cling to the life in which you were bred, to the narrow scruples into which you were born, to the barren dreams

## CAPRICCIOS

which seem to you so real, that my task appears an endless one. You are hardly an apt learner, and I despair of you, my dear professor, with your vain imaginings about the truth, and the marvelous things which you believe that you know.

FAUST

You will not get very far with these railings, and these hints about an understanding which you arrogate to yourself. The devil, doubtless, has a character altogether his own, and not to be mistaken for any other, but knowledge and penetration are not qualities to which he can make a rightful claim. In a world of illusions, some of which have a persistency that sets them apart in an almost undeniable fixity, the worst of illusions must be that the denier of all things and thoughts can fail at last to be the denier of himself.

MEPHISTOPHELES

You argue finely, my dear professor; you really know your lesson admirably; you have it altogether at your tongue's end; how sharp an effect the nipping morning air has upon your discursive faculty!

FAUST

The outlook is indeed imperial, not the less so because of the sober gray that is the predominant

## CAPRICCIOS

color. The world of mists heaves and billows, as though in the throes of giving birth to undreamed-of wonders. Marvelous is it all; I seem to feel the weariness of these latter days falling from me, and the charmed joy of youth slowly flames up again in my soul.

MEPHISTOPHELES

For all this you should be grateful to me; how long will it be before you estimate me aright?

FAUST

Be sure that I know well how to thank you. Begin your magic and your mummeries; what do you want with me on this high vantage-ground? have a care, or here I shall certainly escape you; this loveliness inveighs bitterly against your sinister mockeries.

MEPHISTOPHELES

Nay, I must have a little time; I am somewhat weary and out of breath; this lame member of mine finds climbing less easy than the straight limbs that the witch's draught dowered you withal; but the hour has arrived, and, if you will gaze yonder and downward, you will see along the road leading into the mountain meadow, where the mists separate and then close, some startling wonders.

## CAPRICCIOS

FAUST

Wonders, indeed! births of the sunrise and the morning! What a strange mocker of your own mockeries you are! how fast you undo the very things you would rivet most firmly! Now at last I feel the breath of an enchantment coming over the barren grayness of my thought. Life bursts forth once more within me; the old flowers bloom in the meadows, the old winds blow through the new-leaved trees, the old songs float through the revived atmosphere; the chains with which you have tried to bind me, of your own maladroitness, fall from me, and, on the mountain top to which you have led me, I find my freedom again!

While he speaks, a strange white glory seems to fill the sky above them; it silvers the broad expanse through and through; gradually, however, it condenses and floats downward towards them; Faust responds to its splendor with looks of incredulous joyance, as though within him were movements that he hardly understood, and little knew how to appreciate; the miracle of light at length is poised on a rocky prominence just over him, and the face and form of the angel Raphael are now visible; the figure is clad in silver mail, and the face is gentle and heroic.

FAUST

What marvel is this? Who are you? And whence do you come?

## CAPRICCIOS

RAPHAEL

I am here inasmuch as you have called me.

FAUST

Spirits, it appears, speak always in riddles; I have called no one. (*Turning to Mephistopheles.*) Perhaps your keen wit will be able to explain to me.

Mephistopheles looks white and old; the wrinkles in his face are more noticeable, and he shakes violently, in spite of an evident effort to suppress his emotion.

MEPHISTOPHELES

It is you who indulge in mysteries; I do not even know what you mean; is there some vision floating before your unaccountable gaze? I see only rocks, and the road beneath, and the vanishing mists.

FAUST

Behold, there, on that crag, the mail-clad man, who has descended from the very heavens in the midst of luminous clouds.

RAPHAEL

He both sees me well and knows me well; why continue in this foolish attempt, which will lead to nothing?

MEPHISTOPHELES

Really, now, I do behold you, and remember you;

## CAPRICCIOS

we have met before at the Court of the Old One; but what are you doing here? This mountain is not as firm as your feet should press, and perchance it may melt away and precipitate us all to the bottom; even you might suffer some dislocation in that catastrophe.

While he is speaking, the rocks on which they are standing float into an apparent dissolution; the whole scene wavers with an impending change, which reveals antecedents that were assuredly causative agencies in its production, and, more vaguely, realizations that are the stages of a necessary and brilliant development. The whole is like the movement of thoughts that contain the images and explanations of some great event in the historic process of the world. Raphael is serene and glorious; Mephistopheles stoops like one who is bent above a great and serious toil; a glow of enlightenment shines in the eyes of Faust. In a few moments the transfiguration is over, and the scene is as it was before.

MEPHISTOPHELES

Are you convinced at last?

FAUST

Convinced?

MEPHISTOPHELES

Nay, my dear professor, your slowness of apprehension this morning makes the task which I have set for myself strangely difficult and pro-



## CAPRICCIOS

longed. We may, perhaps, leave this show, which I had conjured up for you, until another and more favorable opportunity.

RAPHAEL

Look; yonder at the mountain's base.

MEPHISTOPHELES

Well, then, be it so; you shall bring on the consummation, which I had supposed still to be delayed; probably, the time is riper than I deemed, and the final clearing up of our good friend's difficulties is at hand.

RAPHAEL

Your efforts are deserving of the success of which somehow they persistently fail; your courage continues unabated, although you find yourself, so often, and in such strange ways, baffled in your attempts; we may as well proceed.

MEPHISTOPHELES

It shall be as you wish.

FAUST

Courtesy becomes you admirably.

MEPHISTOPHELES

Nay, no further raillery; look downward; the

## CAPRICCIOS

mists have vanished, and the road upward to the meadow lies full in view.

FAUST

I seem to sink backward as into an unfathomable abyss; it is as though my being receded into some form of its mutable nature that has long been over-lived; although upon this height, I yet grow part of a strange earlier life; and now I stand upon that often trodden road; you too are there, angel of the serene brow and lifted hand; and, in the very heart of the mad carnival, Mephisto stands and whirls and gloats upon the fury and the rage.

MEPHISTOPHELES

I am indeed to be found in every time, somewhat more myself in those earlier days; here latterly I have been conclusively proven to be sheer nothingness, and I linger shadowlike in some extremely sceptical heads; and yet I am the spirit who deny, and evermore deny myself.

FAUST

My head swims with the madness that I see everywhere around me; who are those beasts storming through the clear landscape, and darkening the very skies above them with their savage rites and cries? They walk erect, and utter uncouth sounds,

## CAPRICCIOS

that are not yet the speech of men; fiercer than wolves or tigers hungering in their lairs, and yet arisen above the dull obedience to the forests and seasons; I know you not; lay not your hands upon me; these am not I, although they claim kinship, and mock me with the claim.

### MEPHISTOPHELES

You are finding out the real heart that beats behind the life which has been since time began; like gives birth to like and unto like returns; the pageant will change, and a certain worthy wisdom will give a surface smoother to the glow of the summer sunshine; but the heart remains the same; rapine, injury, self-seeking, hatred, death, reside at the centre, and at one time showed themselves forth just as they are; let us not hide the truth from ourselves; we would not be deceived; moreover, it may be that it is all only a very bad dream.

### RAPHAEL

Ages on ages have gone; over the mighty road races on races have passed; suns and stars and planets have been born and culminated and vanished; so old is time that thought alone is older; who shall revive the storms and battles and rages of the departed eras? The heart shudders at the retrospect, and shrinks away from the direful contemplation.

## CAPRICCIOS

MEPHISTOPHELES

Yet better is the unconcealed and shameless wickedness than the cloaked hatreds and hidden bestialities of the subsequent and civil generations.

FAUST

The horror has been overlived, and a glen in the rocky roadway far nearer the shimmering meadow surrounds me with marvelous peace and tender serenity. The pastoral landscape sweeps toward the gentle hillside, and the narrow mountain stream rolls clear as glass downward to the flashing lake. On the rocky promontory the fair temple fronts the sun, and the great goddess stands, tall and white and pure, on her sculptured pedestal. The procession winds up the steep side and pauses at the temple gates; it is the very joyance of youthful perfect life.

RAPHAEL

The heart of the world displays its inner workings more clearly in this gay and luminous pageantry. The sure appanage of the soul is joyance, and the atmosphere in which it really dwells is youth.

MEPHISTOPHELES

Let him look deeper ; the surface is, indeed, brilliant enough ; but these shows and pranks and pro-

## CAPRICCIOS

cessions perchance are but the externals of a life that is not wholly as wonderful as it appears. What do you find now, my wise friend and learned professor, now when your gaze is closer and sharper ?

FAUST

Out there in the fields, I see a coarse and rough peasantry, who are fastened to the soil, and whose slavish subjection makes them like unto it in their uncouthness. In the city also everywhere the abject and soulless slave sits at his cheerless tasks, and raises his sullen eyes toward the blue skies, that answer him in no wise at all. In the council are the elders who plot war upon war. Nay, bid me not speak further, the life is rotten at the core, unspeakable, shameless, base beyond all words, and horrible.

RAPHAEL

Do you abandon hope ?

MEPHISTOPHELES

It is now my turn; revolve, O marvelous wheel, bring forth your next and most appalling wonder.

FAUST

Nay, I would not go further, if your will is mine.

## CAPRICCIOS

MEPHISTOPHELES

Do not faint now; you are somewhat white, my dear friend, at the prospect, but the end will be more reassuring,—dreams, nothing but dreams.

FAUST

That sterner widening of the road, rock-circled and less charmed by changeless skies, receives the swarming hordes. The rugged bodies glow white in the steely light of their soberer day. The father rules his household and his sons; the matron sits beside her wheel and spins her lengthening thread; the tillage yellows in the sunshine. The majestic city grows and grows beside the river; it is the pride of life to know her sacred laws and to be recognized as one of her mighty sons; mail-clad and plumed the armies march from her glorious gates; the seas and farthest lands bring tribute; the wanton, wandering tribes bow under the yoke, and know how noble a thing is obedience; mistress and queen of centuries and wide-spreading lands, who would fail to give you thanks and allegiance and worship?

RAPHAEL

Girt with beauty is the shield the warrior bears; generous the strength with which he marches to conquest; noble is the toil that gives man unto

## CAPRICCIOS

himself; the deeper-eyed manhood is more than the grace and sweetness and splendor of youth.

MEPHISTOPHELES

Yet what is that shape you see on yonder golden roof, singing unto the skies, and looking toward your city ?

FAUST

Did I not find you here so close at my side, I should say it was you, O tender Mephisto; the chilly stare of those eyes was lighted at the frozen fires of yours, and the curl of those unfeeling lips derived its bitterness from the unfathomed disdain that resides in your smileless and harsh ones.

MEPHISTOPHELES

Indulge not, sweet friend, in these strange compliments; they fit not the place and the hour; reserve them for the vine-clad arbor and the clinking of responsive glasses.

RAPHAEL

Perchance his seeing is not far from the truth.

FAUST

The old horror comes again; over the whole groaning earth the conflict spreads; there, in the golden



## CAPRICCIOS

and fruitful orient, the fields are splashed with blood; the smooth midland seas re-echo to the combat; brother's hand is raised against brother's; what a mockery is all this boasted splendor, this mighty polity, this vaunted citizenship? Nay, to be a member of this harsh commonwealth is to be a bawd and a murderer; to be an emperor is to be the vile companion of slaves and the ministrant of untold vices; to be a warrior is to be the tool of savagery past conception or comparison. So the fabric totters, and burns, and flames, and falls; the fires therefrom shine across the western seas; the dust of that downfall hides the very sun; march over the wreck, O strong barbarians, bring with you the strength and the breath of your unfathomed woods.

RAPHAEL

Find you no heart of goodness in that seething whirl?

MEPHISTOPHELES

Behold I cast my shadow over that sea of nation-wrecking storm.

FAUST

I know you everywhere.



## CAPRICCIOS

RAPHAEL

Look closer, deeper, surer.

FAUST

I hear strange hymns arising from strange caverns;  
they have a sound not heard before upon the earth;  
their silver music strikes against the very stars;  
they sing a manhood which must be the very heart  
and soul of every man; they sing a love which must  
be the chief of powers; they sing a truth which  
must reform all life until all life becomes a form of  
truth; the band is small, the torch burns feebly,  
but the fire flies far, and now like myriad sparkles  
on a summer sea the glory glitters from uncounted  
places, the weak become the conquerors, the World  
is overcome, *vicisti Galilæe!*

MEPHISTOPHELES

Ha! ha! ha! I feel the horns growing on my  
forehead, these shapely feet shrink into hoofs, and  
a long tail sprouts from my rearmost parts!

FAUST

You seem indeed a relic of the monkeydom, that,  
according to our latest evangels, once held the  
earth.

RAPHAEL

Nay, do not allow him to lead you away into sad

## CAPRICCIOS

and misjudging jests. The vision yet unrolls itself;  
what now appears to you ?

FAUST

Upon the height, where the clear waters gurgle  
from the hillside, and the trees grow thick and  
dusky-green, the solemn cathedral fronts the  
yellowing sun. The intricacy of pinnacles makes  
its web against the sober sky; the myriad windows  
shine with golden glint and glow; the statued saint  
fills niche and coign above, around; the very stones  
feel the vast uplift and the mighty fabric soars into  
the upper air; the wide doors stand open, and the  
mystically garbed priest holds the gold cross above  
the kneeling throng, the clear bell sounds, and the  
chants burst the swift-fleeing silences. O rapture  
rich of commixture with the height of heights and  
splendor of a love that loves but love !

MEPHISTOPHELES

Ha! ha! ha! Superstitious in his maturing years!

RAPHAEL

What more ?

FAUST

In the great city the mighty truth falls from the lips  
of the unfearing man; before his throne the nations

## CAPRICCIOS

bow; kings hold his bridle; his voice is the voice of God.

MEPHISTOPHELES

Ha! ha! ha! Look again!

FAUST

O bitterness of worse defeat than the elder ones! Into the sanctuary the mad corruption creeps; foulness is seated on that golden throne; spirit of evil, who deny, you are there in power again. Let the whole fabric vanish; why thus heap failure upon failure, each baser than the one upon whose heels it treads? angel of goodness, you are less strong than a faint wind that lifts no more than one frail gossamer from the rose's rim!

While he is speaking, a remarkable transformation is taking place; the entire scene, mountain, valley, lake, compress themselves into smaller dimensions; the great figures of Raphael and Mephistopheles are dwarfed into lessening proportions; Faust himself holds something of his former figure, but he too sinks into the attenuated landscape, yet, in an entirely positive sense, he dominates the scene and the two angels, the one of darkness, and the one of light; over and above and around shines an intolerable radiance before which all life hides its eyes, and from which proceeds speech.

THE VOICE

I am the certainty of victory; before me the abysses

## CAPRICCIOS

are afraid; out of me have come good and evil; I accomplish myself; the beginning, the end, the glory am I; I give myself wholly and perpetually; the splendor of Love, whose power and utterance I am, shall be the all in all.

### A VAST MURMUR

What you would, shall be done; we are as a drop of dew in the morning sun, as a vapor rising from a violet's heart, as a single tone struck from a golden lyre; we reach up unto you; we would do as you bid; we would be you!

### THE VOICE

It shall be.

The overpowering effulgence fades gradually away; once more the landscape appears, but bathed in a glow, and clad in a freshness, which give it unfathomed depths of significance; Raphael shines on his height, silver, serene, supreme; over the sardonic aspect of Mephistopheles beams a lustre which is, as it were, the delight of service and the noble indication of a profound obedience. Faust dominates the whole; he is mightier than the world and the angels; the joyance of an assurance, deeper than faith, and true as the uttermost truth, fills his eyes; he knows himself the infinite child of the infinite; principalities, powers, thrones, dominions, he understands to be part of his being, and adjuvants in the completion of the world's destiny as of his own. He looks toward the tableland in the mountain whither the long road has

## CAPRICCIOS

led ; he sees there the nations gathered in a festival, whose meaning is unbounded help, victorious achievement, mastery above the touch of failure or recedence.

MEPHISTOPHELES

There is a beyond ; will you look also at the heart of this vision ; I am the spirit that denies.

RAPHAEL

And I the spirit that everlastingly affirms.

FAUST

And I know that the glory of victory shall be unbroken and eternal.

The sun has now arisen to a great height ; the lake shows brilliant in the distance ; the barren mountain top has a softened smile cast over its herbless expanse of rocks ; below on the road one marks the movement of the daily life ; farmers driving their teams, pleasure-seekers on foot and in various vehicles ; a party of gay young people pause in the green meadow amid the hills. It is given Faust to see all this from his height. One fancies that a vanishing movement of cloud has an unusual radiance, and one imagines the gleam of silver mail in its rapidly ascending and dissipating expanse. Faust makes a brief sign to Mephistopheles, and descending, followed by his companion, disappears soon behind a projection of rock.

The scene closes.



# AT THE FOOT OF THE RAINBOW

THE ARTIST

HIS WIFE

THEIR CHILD

A FRIEND





## I

### THE STUDIO

THE FRIEND (*standing before the painting*)

You have indeed attempted a difficult subject. The morning scene, wrapped in these luminous mists, with its group of dancing figures, seems like the birth of a new world out of some creative dream of a god, fresh from his hand, lovely, gifted with a life that, even as we gaze at it, seems to unfold and reach out ever and ever to a sweeter, nobler perfection.

THE ARTIST

The struggle grows ever more wearisome, and apparently is doomed to persistent failure. I have never allowed myself to descend to works that are merely popular, and so popularity has revenged herself on me by turning her back quite systematically, and of malice aforethought.

THE FRIEND

The times to come will make you full amends.

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE ARTIST

It is now a good many months since that unconsoling consolation has been forced into my hearing. It had, somehow, an unsatisfactory ring, and, at the present juncture, it seems the worst of mockeries.

### THE FRIEND

At the present juncture ?

### THE ARTIST

Why should I have any concealments from you, whose early boyish attachment has continued through these bitter latter days ? The bond between us has deepened and strengthened with the years, this bond of affection and interest, this bond of sympathy and constant encouragement.

### THE FRIEND

Why have I not been told before ?

### THE ARTIST

The common folly of presenting a superficial gloss to the eyes of men, which has no real subsistence is the circumstances which it illustrates. The game has for years been a losing one ; had it not been for my wife, who has finally sacrificed everything, I should have been obliged to surrender long ago. Now the last citadel has been captured by the

## CAPRICCIOS

enemy; the last remnant of fortune left us by the death of a relative has been thrown into the crucible, but the baser metal does not know any transformation into gold. I shall be forced to give up my house, my studio; we shall be wayfarers on the earth, without any shelter except the ashen skies and storm-filled winds of the unpropitious seasons. Strange, is it not, that I should paint morning scenes, forerunners of the golden daytime? I shall thrust my brush into the most sombre of colors, and paint once more, just once more—a night piece, proper and perfect expression of my failure and shattered destiny.

### THE FRIEND

You shall do no such thing; there are numberless ways open to you, and the best of these we will make choice of.

### THE ARTIST

You speak of choice. Do you still believe that there is any such thing as choice? We move in a mist and a maze; what we do is only a part of the inconsequence which encircles us; we isolate a little scene, make it wholly familiar to ourselves, imagine that we dominate it, and find at the last that we are swept into the abyss as those were who preceded us.

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE FRIEND

Why do you persist, therefore, in creating the beautiful, as you call it? Why do you so trouble yourself about the one kind of beauty to which you have given your whole of life and thought? Why not do as some others, whom you decry and look down upon, but who, producing that which the many care for, reap the rewards which the many can bestow, and which you despise, while at the same time bewailing your fate because you do not get them?

### THE ARTIST

It is no longer a question of rewards; it is a question of subsistence for those I love.

The wife enters; she is clothed in a loose white robe, and carries a child, whose singular beauty at once strikes every beholder. He has apparently just come from his bath, and wears only one soft garment, which leaves his rosy feet bare. He crows and gurgles and stretches out his arms to his father, whose gloomy face illumines when he sees him. The friend moves immediately towards the wife and child, and strokes the bright curly hair of the latter, who gazes up at him with wide, unfearing eyes.

### THE WIFE

I hope that I am not intruding; I do not often disturb the working hours; at least, not when I am told, somewhat indirectly, that solitude will con-

## CAPRICCIOS

duce to the rapid completion of the toil; but I heard your voice, (*to the friend*) as I was passing through the hall, and I wanted to show you our boy, whom you have not seen now for quite a while.

### THE FRIEND

Andromache and Astyanax.

### THE WIFE

You are always learned, but you should draw your illustrations from nearer home.

### THE FRIEND

Saint Monica and Saint Augustine.

### THE ARTIST

Nay, it will take too long to travel down the centuries; go out into these woods that surround our dwelling; the village is only a short half-mile from here; in the doorway you will see the mother seated with her child in her arms.

### THE FRIEND

Not a bad thing to put into a picture; the subject too has the merit of being one which breaks no heads to understand.

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE WIFE

I can imagine what you have been talking about. (*She sets the boy down, and he begins to walk around the room. He stops, and looks up at the picture wonderingly.*) I have used all my persuasions, but I have remained wholly effectless. I see plainly, and feel strongly, that the ideal has in modern times come down out of the heavens to dwell with us. We are to behold it resident and vital in the everyday and the commonplace. We are to paint the daily life, but so to fill it with an illumination, evidence certain and positive of the just and noble, that heaven is as patent around us as once it shone high up above us. (*She seats herself, and the child comes to her and climbs into her lap.*)

### THE ARTIST (*somewhat moodily*)

One can only see that which one is fitted for. It is useless to try work which belongs to some other man, and neglect that which we are called to do.

### THE WIFE

Perchance we err in what we call our work, and should be willing to try new paths, when the old ones lead us into the dense depths of the jungle, where the air is suffocating and too hot for healthful breath.

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE FRIEND

Thought is singularly capable of being moulded into any form, whatso you will; nay, form is but thought, and so is eternally expressive. The antique and revered takes the impressure of the artist's fingers, and the most modern of conceptions shines through the changed and glorified legend and myth.

### THE WIFE

Not without a certain difficulty because of the alien material. Why place dancing fauns in a landscape, which no longer harbors them, instead of the children who play in the green dappled sunlight, morning after morning? (*The boy turns half around while she is speaking, and smiles with lovely graciousness on his father and the friend.*)

### THE FRIEND

Your words are convincing, but I should seek no forest and its children playing beneath its branches, nor the near peasant home with its patient maternity.

### THE ARTIST

What then?

### THE FRIEND

Here under your own roof you shall find that, which, blossoming into genuine glory upon your canvas,



## CAPRICCIOS

will bring to you the response which means that you have reached the secret of the world, and know what it is to be bathed in the mighty love which is life and fame.

### THE ARTIST

You bewilder me; I have sought for so many years, and with such utter devotion; I have also found; the world will at last come to me, and recognize itself in me.

### THE FRIEND

There is no need of the dull waiting; those whom you love best have long ago spoken the word into your ear in diverse ways, but you have neither seen nor heard.

### THE WIFE

What is it that you are saying? Do not lessen, in any way, the strength of the message I bring him; let him learn to see the infinite beauty in the near and the familiar; let him bring solace to simple and untutored hearts; he will then know what it is to be the noble means by which the creative soul of the world brings its due wonders into sight and light. To be such a means is to be an artist in truth and reality.



## CAPRICCIOS

He turns at these words, and sees, with a sudden revelation which irradiates him, what a picture is made by the wife and child. The friend, standing beside him, watches with grave interest the changing expression of the artist's face. The child lays its head upon its mother's shoulder, and the model is complete. The artist snatches the picture from the easel, places a new canvas upon it, seizes his brushes and palette, and begins to work with a fierceness and a certainty that he has never shown before. Every stroke is absolutely right and assured, it is the clear vigor of one for whom every mystery of the art has vanished, the perfect touch that is the very activity of spiritual might itself.

### THE ARTIST

It comes to me with blinding inspiration. There, do not move; I must have you I do not know for how long; you shall see what a wonderful flower will grow under my fingers.

The wife and friend exchange glances; she holds her attitude, and the child remains mute with a lovely astonishment in his eyes and face; out of the mist of the canvas the glow of color already begins to shimmer; the friend looks on exultantly; the scene closes.

## CAPRICCIOS

### II.

A glen in the mountains. It is at the end of a winding narrow gorge, through which a stream leaps, gurgling from rock to rock, and making here and there quieter limpid pools. In front the cliff rises to considerable height; it is covered with soft wet moss, and trees grow from various ledges and projections; a waterfall, sparse and feathery, sweeps down the perpendicular side, and mingles with a small clear expanse of waters at its foot, through which the broad stones emerge brown and tipped with moss. One of these upholds the child, fearless and laughing; on another the mother stands and watches his every movement; the artist is stretched along a fallen tree near by; around the half-circle above, the waving trees show against the deep blue sky, across which flit birds, and slower-moving clouds. It is the beginning of the afternoon, and the sunlight pours down into the shadowy glen, irradiating the dash of the waters.

#### THE WIFE

There, child, do not move about so much. Mother will have to take you up.

#### THE ARTIST

He will surely fall into the water, and injure himself on the rocks; give him to me, and let me hold him, while he takes his fill of gazing.

The child seats himself, and his little legs dangle over the waters, but are too short to reach them.

## CAPRICCIOS

THE WIFE

Now he is safe; I should like to hold my cup under the waterfall, and get a drink of the descending foam. How like a glistening mist it is!

THE ARTIST

Nectar from the very heavens; it comes from the mountains beyond, which we saw while we rowed on the lake. Drink, dear one, and bring the sky into my life even more than you have hitherto done.

THE WIFE

I am afraid that I cannot reach it.

THE ARTIST

Let me get it for you.

THE WIFE

No; that would hardly be *my* bringing the sky into your life.

THE ARTIST

Even so, even so.

She leaps from rock to rock with some difficulty, and reaches one just under the cliff; the water falls in a thin shower in front of her, but she does not mind it; she holds her cup under and it is soon filled; she turns for a moment, and stands there, part of the golden foam, the very spirit of the light and mist; her hair glistens with many drops; she smiles as she

## CAPRICCIOS

places her lips to the cup ; then she leaps back firmly and securely and bids the child drink, who does so laughingly ; at last she reaches the artist, who drains the cup as though he were tasting the very wine of life. She seats herself beside him.

### THE ARTIST

So, that is well ; the boy will be still for a few moments, and when he gets restless, I will bring him here in spite of his certain objections.

### THE WIFE

It is indeed a lovely spot.

### THE ARTIST (*moodily*)

We are reckless like all persons of our class ; we are on the verge of ruin, and we spend the remnant of our substance in a vacation which we cannot afford.

### THE WIFE

Life is made up of recollections and anticipations ; the former, in our case, shall all of them be lovely, and I, at least, see no great darkness in the latter.

### THE ARTIST

We shall have to give up our studio, our home, our friends.

### THE WIFE

We shall find other places and companionships.

## CAPRICCIOS

THE ARTIST

And my career is over.

THE WIFE

Your career is only beginning.

A voice hallooing up the gorge is heard ; it has a ring of good cheer ; it pauses, and then breaks forth again.

THE ARTIST

It is our friend ; you knew that I expected him ?

THE WIFE

Yes, I knew.

The artist springs to his feet, and, placing his hands to his lips, answers the call down the echoing cleft ; the halloo comes back, more and more resonant with cheer. He leaps forward in eagerness to meet the visitor, while the wife steps over to the child, and takes him into her arms. It is but a few moments, and the artist and the friend are near her. The latter takes the boy and kisses him. The lonely spot seems to grow glad with the new presence.

THE ARTIST

And now what news ? Or would you rather remain silent ?

THE FRIEND

Nay, there is no such need of haste ; let me feel your presence awhile ; and let me become some-

## CAPRICCIOS

what familiar with this recess in the mountains, lovelier than any words can make it, and holding a charm, which not even your brushes can wholly reproduce.

### THE ARTIST

Unless your message is propitious, I shall never again reproduce anything.

### THE FRIEND

Have you thought of the new occupation to which you intend to devote yourself ?

### THE ARTIST

That is a matter not worthy of a moment's choice ; for every man there is but one occupation ; take that away from him, and the rest are but varying forms of the formless indifference.

### THE FRIEND

Heretical always, even here in the woods and hills ; still I have a message for you.

The wife with the boy has gone nearer the waterfall again while they have been talking ; she stands on a rock somewhat smoother and broader than the rest ; the waters gurgle and foam and bubble around her ; the child plays with her hair ; she speaks loud enough so that the artist and friend can hear her.

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE WIFE

Whatsoever message you deliver, remember it is my property as well as yours.

### THE FRIEND

It is your property, indeed.

### THE ARTIST

You are purposely delaying; yet you are only half serious; come, come, let it emerge from the gate of your lips.

### THE FRIEND

Then here it is. Your picture has been hung on the walls of the academy in the place above all others which you yourself would have chosen.

### THE ARTIST

I am not skied as usual. I left it all with you. My hopelessness sent me here, and I have, as I agreed, shut out all information from the world which I left behind me.

### THE FRIEND

It was what you especially needed; you were wholly unnerved and unstrung; forgetfulness, calm, simple enjoyment of the passing hour, were what your condition called for. I am a physician, most to be trusted and most sound.



## CAPRICCIOS

THE WIFE

I never had any doubt of the result.

THE ARTIST

Nay, dear wife, without you I should have succumbed long ago.

THE FRIEND

Why do I dally, then ? I am indeed playing with my own pleasure.

He begins to halloo as he had previously done ; a myriad echoes bring back the tones, and the whole air seems pervaded with joyance.

THE ARTIST (*white to the lips*)

What next ? Why do you talk and act thus ?

THE FRIEND

I hope you will learn the lesson fully ; the new sun has arisen ; it remains with you to bring on the full and complete day.

THE ARTIST

I have been learning lessons all my life ; and I yet remain a mere pupil, when I should be a master.

THE FRIEND

The masterhood has come ; you have been groping all these years ; you now know what that occupa-



## CAPRICCIOS

tion really is, which alone is worthy of the name. No more landscapes with fauns and nymphs and satyrs; human life, its simple joys and hopes, its many sorrows and consolations, these you shall transfigure with your perfect touch and color.

THE ARTIST

What now ?

THE FRIEND

Your picture is the success of the season; it is the success of many seasons; it is accepted as the evidence of genuine and permanent masterhood; the grave responsibility has come upon you—true leader of thought and hope to your generation.

THE WIFE

I have heard it all, but I did not need your words, I knew it always.

THE ARTIST

Life begins for me anew.

The child laughs aloud. The artist and his friend turn. The rock on which the wife is standing glows in the opulent sunlight like very gold; the wavelets and ripples about it quiver and glint with radiance; and, rising above her and the child, from the stream in the gorge to the top of the waterfall, stretches the rainbow which the sun makes there at his accustomed hour.

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE FRIEND

The proverbial pot of gold! Pay homage to the wife and child who have brought it to you—the new art which shall make you what you ought to be, and the world nobler, because they and you have lived in it.

MYRIAD-MINDED MAN

*An Imaginary Conversation*

THINKER

BELIEVER

ARTIST

DILETTANTE



#### THE ARTIST

We can rest here. My walk, a long one for me, has fatigued me a little. Here is a noble outlook upon the sea, brilliant under the summer sun. The cliff sweeps swiftly down to the white curve of sand; the low shrubbery in successive rings clothes it to the very foot; the white sails flash as they approach, and become part of the blue mist as they recede; the grass at the foot of these trees is thick enough, and, in the grateful shade, looking forth upon the moving waters, we can sit, discoursing upon free-will and fate, growth and decay, beauty and truth, life and death.

#### THE DILETTANTE (*after they have seated themselves in various easy postures*)

An excellent series of antitheses! How every thought clings to its opposite! You bring up one picture, and the other is sure to follow it! We are thus in a perpetual oscillation; to cling to one thing, or trust oneself to a single truth, a so-called eternal verity, is a childish sort of self-deception,

## CAPRICCIOS

out of which we shall emerge as from our oyster-condition some day.

THE BELIEVER

You really do not hold to that quite as you say it ?

THE DILETTANTE

Hold to it ? You know very well that I do not hold to anything.

THE THINKER

Not even that you do not hold to anything.

THE DILETTANTE

Why should we, of malice aforethought, set limits to the boundlessness, which is our true self and nature ? There is nothing anywhere that is fixed or permanent; the river forever flows to the sea; the winds always indulge in mad revels about the earth; the eternal stars shine but for a time, and then the night knows them no more; the mind of man moves from one mood to another, forever changing, sometimes radiant with a light that we call joy, sometimes buried in a gloom that we call sorrow, always in transition, always convinced of the certainty of the dream in which it finds itself for an interval, longer or shorter, as its humor lasts.

THE ARTIST

The world of dreams has at all times a strange

## CAPRICCIOS

fascination for us; a world that we build according to our own caprice; and wonderful it is, that at every era in the world's history, for periods of indefinite duration, the caprices of men have a singular unanimity; what is in the heart and mind of each, those who feel more deeply, or think more clearly, thrust forth into sharp and fine expression; that dream which is called nature was different to the Greek from its splendor as we dwell in it to-day; that dream which we call life has now elements in it which it never had before.

### THE BELIEVER

It would seem to me more correct to say that our recognition of this dream has in it elements which it never had before. I am also little inclined to be satisfied with the word dream as applied to what must be fact; except, indeed, that the word involves that the fact is spiritual, that it is made up throughout of conditions, which could not be save as presupposing mind and heart and purpose. A dream that is the same to all men, that is permanent the more we understand it, comes very close to being reality itself. This dream, moreover, in its substance and truth, has always been, has always been complete, could never have been other than finished and perfect. Growth and change can only be in our deepening knowledge of the true and abiding.

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE DILETTANTE

The mood of the optimist; we live in that during these early summer days; who would not believe while he gazes out over yonder flashing expanse, so softly blue, so gently alluring ! There, in the blue mist, surely is the earthly paradise for which we all long; and every white sail disappears into it. Soon, however, the autumn winds will be blowing over a gray and lustreless sea; darkness, deep and unfathomable, will hover over the horizon; and we shall betake ourselves to the mood of pessimism, with its fascination of pain, its soft enjoyment of anguish, its sweet and morbid self-pity, its moonlighted rapture of pathos and death.

### THE THINKER

I should like to hold upon my hand, as it were, these singular views of existence, and look at them carefully, under such glasses as the mind surely furnishes for the analysis and discovery of potencies, which make life what it is, and whose understanding alone gives value to what we are and seek. These vacillations between contradictory points of view have a wondrous interest, and these shiftings from darkness into light, and from light into darkness, have at least *this* unchangeable about them, that they shift and change.



## CAPRICCIOS

### THE ARTIST

I would live always in the concrete; the thin abstractions that the intellect weaves for us seem to me less real than my dreams of the speeding night. And yet I cannot altogether yield myself to the subjection of my evanescent moods. Somehow, to me, one mood returns again and again; one dream persists as no other dream persists; and as I wander through gallery after gallery, as I stand before Middle-Age cathedral or modern church, as I gaze upon forms cast in bronze or hewn from marble, I find that the same mood has filled the heart of the artist everywhere and always.

### THE DILETTANTE

What may that so persistent mood be ?

### THE ARTIST

It is the hunger for perfection, the thirst after righteousness or rightness, whichever you please, the eager demand for harmony and completeness. The rose by the wayside, sweet and tender though it may be, has somewhere a defect; the sky, with its ever changing clouds, has yet a tone which is not wholly what the eye longs for and must have; the water comes to the shore and recedes, flashes in myriad resplendence far out under the freshening wind, but it has somehow a shadow too much, or a

## CAPRICCIOS

glow too excessive; under the transfiguring touch of the painter, or in the rhythmical page of the poet, all which is simply right appears, as it were, by a miracle great as that which belongs to the birth of worlds, or the rise of souls out of the deep, dark mystery.

### THE DILETTANTE

What century is this which thus speaks to us ? The dreams of an elder time. Not that I do not believe in them; I yield myself to their charm, and float away upon their melodious radiance even as you do, but it is far from being the dominant mood of the day or generation to which we belong.

### THE BELIEVER

It is a strange sea upon which you are willing to be tossed: whether it be light or dark, subject to malignant storms or visited by serene sunshine, the slender vessel in which you venture to ride is yet borne from haven to haven, and nowhere can you find secure harborage or satisfying rest. I listen to the solemn voices, which have come direct from the heavens, and fill the marts of the world and the mighty solitudes with the messages which whoso would live must hear. Not beauty do we seek, for that would cloy upon our taste with its

## CAPRICCIOS

rich sweetness long before the revelation for which we clamor might come; but devotion to the Supreme Life, whose essence is self-sacrifice, whose being is love, whose servant and manifestation is loveliness, must inflame our hearts with enthusiasms, whence all other illuminations take their color and endurance.

### THE THINKER

Yet all these rest upon deeper demonstration and evidence. Who shall say that the succession of delights, wherein we bathe ourselves so eagerly, have in them anything of permanent strength to give to our vacillating hopes and glimmering thoughts of the certain and the eternal? Or who shall assure us that the multitudinous and clashing words of prophets and ministrants at varying altars bear in them the everlasting and the divine? The truth must be self-revelatory; reason, holy, supreme, can ask for no reasons, which itself does not present and create; thought can go to no oracles, profound as the deep and abiding forms which it beholds within its all-embracing reality; universes, gods, serenely dwell within that mighty view, whose completeness is veritable subsistence, whose calm gives place to all aspirations, all dreams, whose mutual and interwoven relatedness is evidence irrefragable.

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE DILETTANTE

I look out over the waters: I see myriads on myriads of ripples, each bearing within its pellucid veil a golden lamp, which burns now brightly, and then fades to be kindled anew at the exhaustless sun; the light weaves across the broad expanse an ever changing series of motions and brilliances; I yield myself to the fitful charm. I would no more be fettered than yonder race and riot of coruscations. What the sea may be in itself, I do not care to fathom, nay, I do not know why I should ask myself such a question, and as to whence it may have come, that is a darkness where never a single star guides the feet of any man. To enjoy is to live, and suffering itself, if rightly appreciated, is only the most exquisite of pleasures.

### THE BELIEVER

You look out upon the sea, a vast, soulless reach, a play of conscienceless powers, a mockery of the movements that are held leashed and obedient to a purpose, grand as the world, and thoroughly alive in every fibre. Nature is a strange and contradictory symbol; what we are, we learn by recognizing that we are not what nature is; out there the storm of unbridled and unmoral powers, the tumult of wild passions unsubordinated in themselves to high

## CAPRICCIOS

intents, the vastness which beholds with stolid indifference the procession of events, ignoble or glorious, passing before it; it is the heart and soul of humanity, the spirit, which is transcendent and divine, which throws around that turmoil the joyous subjection to lofty ends, and builds it into the ideal, which is all light and forever a deeper and deeper consummation.

### THE ARTIST

I stood, a few nights ago, in the presence of a more portentous sea, and a commingling of lights of a more inspiring character. It was in the early evening, and I gazed from a window in one of those sky-scaling buildings with which the avarice of the modern man invades the realm of the air. Below me stretched a vast portion of the seething and toiling city; the gray roofs in the increasing darkness fused into a dull indistinctness; from the chimneys rose a pale vapor that made the mystery stranger and weirder; all things were blended into a sea-like breadth and aloofness; outlines of buildings and towers were blurred into a mighty chaos, from which the touch of the morning would bring them again into separateness, cold and severe as truth; but throughout the gloom glistened and scintillated and shone the array of lights from

## CAPRICCIOS

countless windows, which themselves were lost in the prevalent obscurity. They flickered and played and danced everywhere, about them a mist made by the night, visible, but unearthly, seeming not golden as stars, but a fluidity of radiance, ever dominating the shadows, and palpitant with a life as of hope and dream. Yonder sea is but a cold and vague caprice, set side by side with that vision of spirit, victoriously contending with gloom and making it subservient to beauty.

### THE DILETTANTE

One of the finest moods of the day. This is the time when humanitarianism has great fascination; it is only a temporary guise of the spirit; slavery is just as admirable when seen as it should be; the self-sacrifice of a great number of men so that a fierce ecstasy may sweep through a few hearts is certainly a spectacle which may give one a passing thrill; just as now the uplift of toiling millions to a place where they will know how to suffer as those whom they envy have done for generations brings with it an enthusiasm that one may well rejoice in for a short while.

### THE THINKER

There can be no real return to views which were the common property of men ages ago, which had



## CAPRICCIOS

for them the strength of unshaken conviction, and which, in the process of the suns, have disappeared as elements in world-understandings larger and more competent. We may fancy ourselves as much held entranced by the romantic hues glorifying historic periods long past and overlived as by the soberer tints that belong to the present, but such an attempt is possible only as a sort of self-deception, and for a very brief period. Even Greece, with her charm of finish and exquisite color and superb moderation, is after all an immature effort of the human spirit compared with the labors of to-day.

### THE DILETTANTE

What has maturity or immaturity to do with it? A certain mood on a large and pervasive scale exists; it has its necessary forms and conditions; it has its features, lovely and repulsive; it has been held by mistaken men as the one thing essential, the one aspect of the world, which shall be sure and permanent; it fades and fails as all others have done. The only thing which persists is the possibility of non-persistence; drink deep of the cup of to-day; to-morrow, when it comes, with its new sun and sky and cloud, will offer you a new wine, sweet again to the taste that yields itself up to it; and the memory can at all times sink backward into

## CAPRICCIOS

what has been, and the heart look forward to what must be.

### THE BELIEVER

You turn upon the mighty procession too cursory a glance. Unhappily for your dream, the sequence of events is not one which can be shuffled backwards and forwards like a loose pack of cards. The memory may indeed decipher its own palimpsest at its own will, and lift up a shadowy layer of words deep under the last one fresh from the transcriber's hands, but the emotion itself which you crave is woven of unnumbered strands, and not the least part of the miraculous joy is the going back to it from the mixed and deepened feeling of to-day. The exquisite changefulness of the spirit rests upon the deeper truth, that it forevermore restores itself from its own changes, and holds within its persistency the enchanting mirages of its own evanishments.

### THE DILETTANTE

You cannot really speak of a high or low; you cannot even speak of a simple or a complex. Modern life merely accentuates that of which other lives made but little; and antiquity gave itself to labors wherein we are but as children compared with it in dignity and completeness.



## CAPRICCIOS

### THE THINKER

The very succession of time itself, in its bare simplicity, consists perforce of a less and more; the latter is because it has in it a complexity of moments which the earlier could not possess; the complex and the high are coterminous; from these results we cannot escape if we would not throw our whole intellectual life into confusion; a mood is only such because we can abandon it for a permanent consideration of the world which takes it up into itself as the great ether the glittering bubbles filled with the breath of children in the clear hours of a vanishing twilight.

### THE DILETTANTE

I find myself in the land of my severest enemies. Yet I have weapons with which to contend against them; the victory which they hope to win over me is as transient as the mood of changefulness in which I love to dwell.

### THE ARTIST

How can you say that you love? That, at least in its ultimate form, can know not shadow of turning.

### THE DILETTANTE

You press me hard. The Eleusinian mysteries were not for all men; and the cult to which I am glad to

## CAPRICCIOS

belong has also its deep privacies and sanctities, where the profane and vulgar may not intrude.

### THE ARTIST

It is a gloom which has no allurements for me; on its gateway I read the dolorous legend, but I question whether the love of any god has aught to do with the fashioning of that indescribable realm. Rather do I seek the region in which poetry and song and painting have ever found a congenial home; the wealth and victories of all times and places have been to it only as servants and helpers; power has found its chief claim to recognition in its willingness to further the ends of a world-embracing artistry; there life reaches its superbést splendor, its grandest fruition; the past, with all its glories, its aspirations, its agonies, its ecstasies, is there; the present glows under that sun with a perfection that its reality is powerless to attain; the unapparent and the unaccomplished shine along those skies as never sunset beneath the warm winds of the tropics; and all that region is the free creation of the spirit, amorous alone of the high perfection, whose meaning is love to all things and men.

### THE DILETTANTE

Into that region I am fain to follow you.

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE ARTIST

Nay, that you can never do; for only the eye, single and sincere, can see it, the heart, fixed and resolute, can pass the warders at the gates.

### THE BELIEVER

There are two aspects of the universe which must fill the mind of man with reverence, as one of earth's greatest thinkers said years ago—the serenity of the starry heavens, and the determinations of the will; the majestic procession of worlds on worlds from the abyss of creative life, and the superb mastery of the whole by the self-legislative might of the invisible. I penetrate into the realm of the power and strength of inmost being; I see the region where Freedom breathes and dwells; I behold the interblending of deeds, whose motive is the whole of action and whose result is the whole of goodness. The garment which that region wears in its every valley and hill and river, its radiances by night, and its suffusing sun by day, is the high and ultimate loveliness. Every heart-throb of the multitudinous host, inhabiting there as in their primeval paradise, is love for the envyless generosity, which dwells at the center, which resides at the circumference, which is complete in every part, which glows in itself, an ineffable splendor,

## CAPRICCIOS

above, around, within. With the eyes of a faith which has emerged sublime from the dark wood of questioning, I see; with the strength of a hope, which has beheld its own gradual realization, I know; it is the abode of souls, permanent, eternal.

### THE DILETTANTE

I have often solaced myself with the gentle opiate of that mood; I have often sped far away on the wings of that dream; and now I am with you on those mystical highlands.

### THE BELIEVER

Nay, you mistake. The pathway to that land is the hard one of renunciation upon renunciation; the grassy fields and flower-sprent meadows are left behind; beyond the barren waste it lies; you can never have trodden that way; those skies are ignorant of you.

### THE THINKER

There is yet a beyond which makes the glory of beauty, and feeds the flame of holiness, which needs no revelation save itself, no prophet save the voice of its own eternity, no allurements save the unfolding of its intertexture, within the which life and thought and dreams are woven like the figures of a marvelous tapestry. It is the calm and noble

## CAPRICCIOS

rest which gives motion to all restlessness; it is the assurance which thrills in all faith; it is the completion, which burns in all love. It is the purity and the majesty, whence all longing has descended, and into which it must return as into its haven and home.

### THE DILETTANTE

I have never had a great affection for your pale abstractions. Yet I have filled my uplifted cup with that moonlight and drank it off, making myself believe it was wine. I have trodden those vales, filled with silvery mist, with something of a shudder, and have known the chilly thrill, which you call pleasure.

### THE THINKER

Nay, deceive yourself no longer, dear friend; such toil as is needed to unbar the portals of that mystery calls for other thews than you are endowed withal.

### THE DILETTANTE

You cast me forth from your respective paradises ?  
Where then do I dwell ?

### THE THINKER

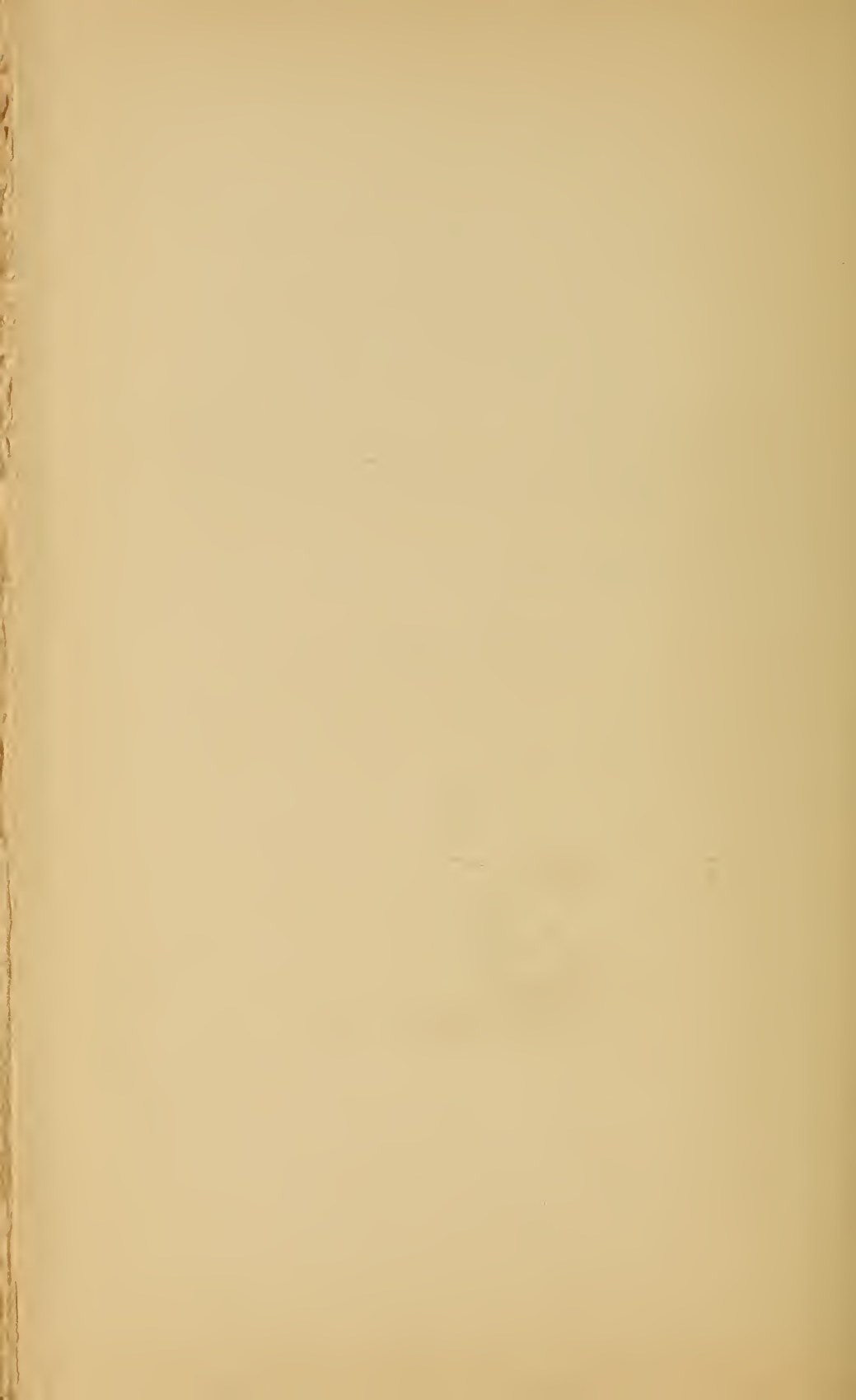
The land of caprice has no fixity; did it continue, it would not be the land of caprice. Bubbles wander

## CAPRICCIOS

through the infinite paths of the air; lights of the fen speed from ripple to ripple, from flag-flower to flag-flower; moods of the mind flutter across its surface and vanish into the nought. Begin your journey again; gird up your loins for the steep and bitter climb; wear the straight and sober garb of patience; throw into the first flame the wings of your restless undoing; the universal, which is all things and all thoughts, stands waiting to receive you with its benediction and its salvation.

THE DAY OF DAYS.

A PROTHALAMION.





#### THE SUN

I pour a flood of red and gold over the sky because I am full of a wonderful joy; the night is fleeing before me, and the dark hovers in vanishing mists at the verge of the earth.

#### THE CLOUDS

We are sailing and sailing over the winds; we were heavy with sleep and with night, and the shadows crept all through us; but now we swim on the tide of crinkling light, and our thin bodies thrill and flush with the fervor of joy.

#### THE WINDS

We move faster and faster to the goal; we looked up in the night and saw not a single star, and we moaned as we longed for the coming of the morning; now we are changed into the gold of the sun, his radiance lives in us, and makes us voices of fresh and clear and crystalline joy.

## CAPRICCIOS

HE

I waited long, ah, so long and so wearily; once I thought the sun would never return to the heavens; it was not even night, for the moon was not, nor the stars, only a blackness, a silence, a dullness; now the skies are aflame with brightness, now the winds are filled with sweet singing, now the day has surely come, and I see all my dreams waiting to greet me deep in your eyes.

SHE

Do not speak a word, but hearken to our heart-beats; every sound is a loss of the silence, every murmur disturbs the flowing of breath into breath and life into life, the joy that is the soul of the day and the summer, the joy that takes us and makes us one with it, one with the summer, with the day, with the sunshine.

THE RIVER

I am now a rippled moving flood of silver, the sun is above me in the heart of the heavens; I flow past field and village and town, the children come down to me and mirror their glowing faces, the boats cleave across my fluent shining. I rejoice in their glad rocking from side to side, and speed swiftly past village and town and field to the large and smooth and sounding sea.

## CAPRICCIOS

### THE GRASS

I am filling myself full with the sunshine. I gave up my dewdrops gladly hours ago. I move steadily across the wide fields and grow even down to the river's margin; I wander under the shadows of the forest, and leave spaces for the little flowers to rise between my spears; the sweetness of the earth comes to your eyes in me, and I am like a laugh around the green earth.

### THE TREES

We climb upward and upward; down below in our roots there is something that makes us long for the air and the sunlight; we look to the blue sky afar, and push through the winds to the source of the glow and the radiance; our myriad leaves are like many little voices that sing from their slender perches on the branches, green small birds that do not wish to fly away from us, but carol of the rapture that rules in their life and their growing, of the bliss that flickers in their manifold movements.

### HE

Look into the depth of the sky; the hot tide of sunlight fills up the cup of the air, and the glow of the wine of day is shining through its pure and lucid sides; it is the wine of the joy we are drinking.

## CAPRICCIOS

SHE

Why should I longer keep back what I long to say ?  
What is there now to hold me from confessing ? I  
would have said all long ago but my fear restrained  
me.

THE CHILDREN

We rose this morning gaily and sped to the fields;  
some of us stopped by the swift moving river, some  
of us sat on the rocks and watched the slim cool  
fishes, some of us stayed under the trees and told  
the old stories, long and slow and golden with sun-  
shine.

THE WOMEN

We labor still and bend with our toiling; we know  
the trouble that comes with children; we bore  
them under our hearts and still we bear them; we  
are fearful of what befalls them or may befall them;  
all our life is set apart from our living, going away  
from us, who shall say whither ? This indeed it is  
to be a woman, to give up life forever to others,  
to see ourselves apart from our heart-throbs, to feel  
the pulse of the world uniting with ours in our  
yielding of all that we are or may be.

SHE

I will withhold not one thing which you ask me, I

## CAPRICCIOS

make myself a part of your thought, I make myself  
a part of you, touching thus the world.

### THE MEN

We have built here a home by the roadside, white  
and far seen under the tree-shadows, leading unto  
the town which we, too, have builded; yet all our  
work in the hot sunshine is not for us; we do what  
we do for all others.

### HE

Yea, give yourself up wholly, I take it all forever;  
strength are you thus to the hand, and breath to  
the thought; I bring you the world and its splen-  
dor, being holpen of you; I fashion all, and you  
are its joy and its sovereign!

### EARTH

The ground of life is forever firm and deep and sure  
and strong; a bed for blossoms and grasses to spring  
in; it gives itself to use and growth and loveliness  
at the least word and the faintest call.

### AIR

Circles of currents and wildness of eddies, viewless  
save in the mystical blue of distance, fluent to make  
and unmake my commotions, wondrous as thoughts  
that flow through a soul, subtle and high and yield-

## CAPRICCIOS

ing yet master, sending clouds afar on my messages, breath of the body and strength of the dreamer, speeding upwards to stars and to suns, voice of the music of the day or the night-time, know you not, prophet and thinker, what the tales are that I am forever telling, and whither I lead on my wings of marvelous swiftness ?

HE

There is nothing that I will not speak into your ear; I learn many marvels, and hear many secrets, and they are all only for you.

WATER

Colored with light that falls from the heavens, moulded in forms that enclose me sweetly, glittering clearly amid the emerald grasses, falling from rock to rock down the mountains, piercing the air on my pilgrimage sunward, crooning my lay in the ear of my shores, giving myself as drink to fair blossoms, shining transformed in tree and in leaflet, what a changeable joyance I am, what a purity, what a miracle of loving!

SHE

You are held in my life as a dream in the soul of a dreamer. I fleet forward during times when you are not with me, and encircle the very outermost

## CAPRICCIOS

rim of the world with the flood that is my longing,  
and so enfold you as a star is enfolded by the deep  
blue night, as a singer by the golden mist of his  
music, as an island by its lake's dark-green and  
wind-kissed ripples.

### FIRE

Restless as hopes that may not slumber, red in the  
skies of midsummer's dawn, strong to fashion and  
make by uncreating, wise with the aims that are  
deepest and surest, monarch swift in my mutable  
garb, holding asunder to bind in closer friendships,  
bending all strengths to the rule of the nobler, po-  
tence and will and passion of joyance, light of the  
suns and flambeau whence starshine gains what it  
has of radiance, happy to gleam on the cottager's  
hearthstone, eye of the eye that returns to itself  
from the clear waters, what are men save as I am  
the pulsebeat, the heart of their hearts, and the  
life of their living ?

### SHE

I will whatever you will; I know deep down in my  
heart the longing that your eyes do not half so  
clearly reveal; what you ask of me is a light thing  
to do, light as flames of sunlight that flash from the  
many-peaked waters, light as the dance of the  
leaves when the winds are ready for playtime, or



## CAPRICCIOS

the spreading of the petals of roses at the touch of summer.

### THE LIVING

O the wondrous light that fills the high heavens! O the days that pass to the sound of sweet singing! O the bliss of being and dreaming! The earth moves gladly around her father sun, and his smile illumines her in all her dancing. We would not have summer prevailing forever; the icy glitter of snow fields around us, the frozen streams amid the rocks of the mountains, glistening and glowing with reflected noontide, the talks at night while the cold holds the sky without, make in our souls their own sweet music. We rejoice here in the hours that linger as if loth to leave us in their inevitable passage. Like unto a boat wherein we are riding amid the swift billows, seeing the distant shores and islands faintly, the waters sweeping about us as far as the eye may reach, the crystalline pureness overhead and beneath, the fathomless depths of sea and dim silence around, is the Now in the voiceless ocean of Time, waves of the centuries closing about it, stillness encircling the one spot of music. But we are friends sailing in the little bark, sunlight envelops us, sunlight enwalls us, and our labors content and delight us.



## CAPRICCIOS

### THE DEAD

We have thrown from us the burdens that weighed so heavily; we have emerged from the shadows and entered the day; we are no longer the slaves of strange fears and stranger doubts; we are in a certainty of bliss that widens and deepens; we see how our lives are wondrously linked and united; wherever a joy springs in a waiting bosom, its thrill is felt in all hearts in all the heavens; wherever a truth lightens across a soul's horizon, a new star shines in the skies that are ours; we live in this garden of magical flowers, that grow into view as our myriad dreams flow through us; when a higher throb of love fleets over our being, a richer flush augments the pulsing sea of color; with the white clear stars of truth above us, with the glow and resurgence of our loves in blooms around us, with our acts reverberating miraculously from afar or near, life is all light and hue and responsive music.

### SHE

Lo! we are both that which has been from the beginning, which shall be at the goal whithersoever Time reaches.

### HE

The dear ones we loved who have gone before us, the sweet ones who shall be yours when age over-

## CAPRICCIOS

takes us, lo! in a circle of angelic splendor, gyre upon gyre of ecstatic luminous faces, glories of heaven attained and incarnate, they engird us, they sing to us divine melodies, they weave the dance of mystical wonder around us.

### THE MANY JOYS

The grass sweeps lightly across the meadow in the springtime, sweeps like a sweet green tune across the earth, bathing it in music of the just returned year; the fine fleet ripples move gaily across the river; if you bend the ear, you can hear their mirth and murmur, and understand their secret happiness; the winds are full of love as they lift the leaflets, and speed from light-poised slender-pointed greenery into the heart of the golden sunshine above and around them; the sunbeams far off on the mountains touch the rocks, and their barren brown ruggedness answers with a deep-hued golden glow of somber splendence, with sacred and slow and sober movements of rejoicing; fathers walking beside the skipping children, mothers holding the babbling babes in their arms, smile answering to smile in each other's faces, gladden and brighten with the growth of the season; up in the heavens a deeper blue curves inward, filled with a light from sources beyond;

## CAPRICCIOS

farther and higher the encircling flood of delight reaches and rolls till no uttermost limit is not penetrated and permeated with its enchantment.

### SHE

I feel myself becoming many joys, even as the sea knows itself a-glitter in myriad points; I float forth into a severance, high, divine, even as the night blooms forth into her countless stars; I divide into a multitude of visioning hopes even as the garden shows in spring her affluence of great flowers.

### THE ONE JOY

The sheaves of the rays of light are gathered back into the sun; the rivers from mountain and moor flow back to the sea; the days that are dead, the hours that are to be, are here in the now; all hopes are brought back into the one sweet hope, all lives return to the life whence they sprung; dreams revolve around the one great dream in a glad dance, joys are broken blossoms from the one great joy; a single white rose is the soul of the world, its multiform petals cling around its golden heart; the voices that sing repeat the pure theme; from the single note in a flame-winged descent came all the melodies of soul and bliss; the single note brings them back, and all song murmurs and sounds at home in its heaven.

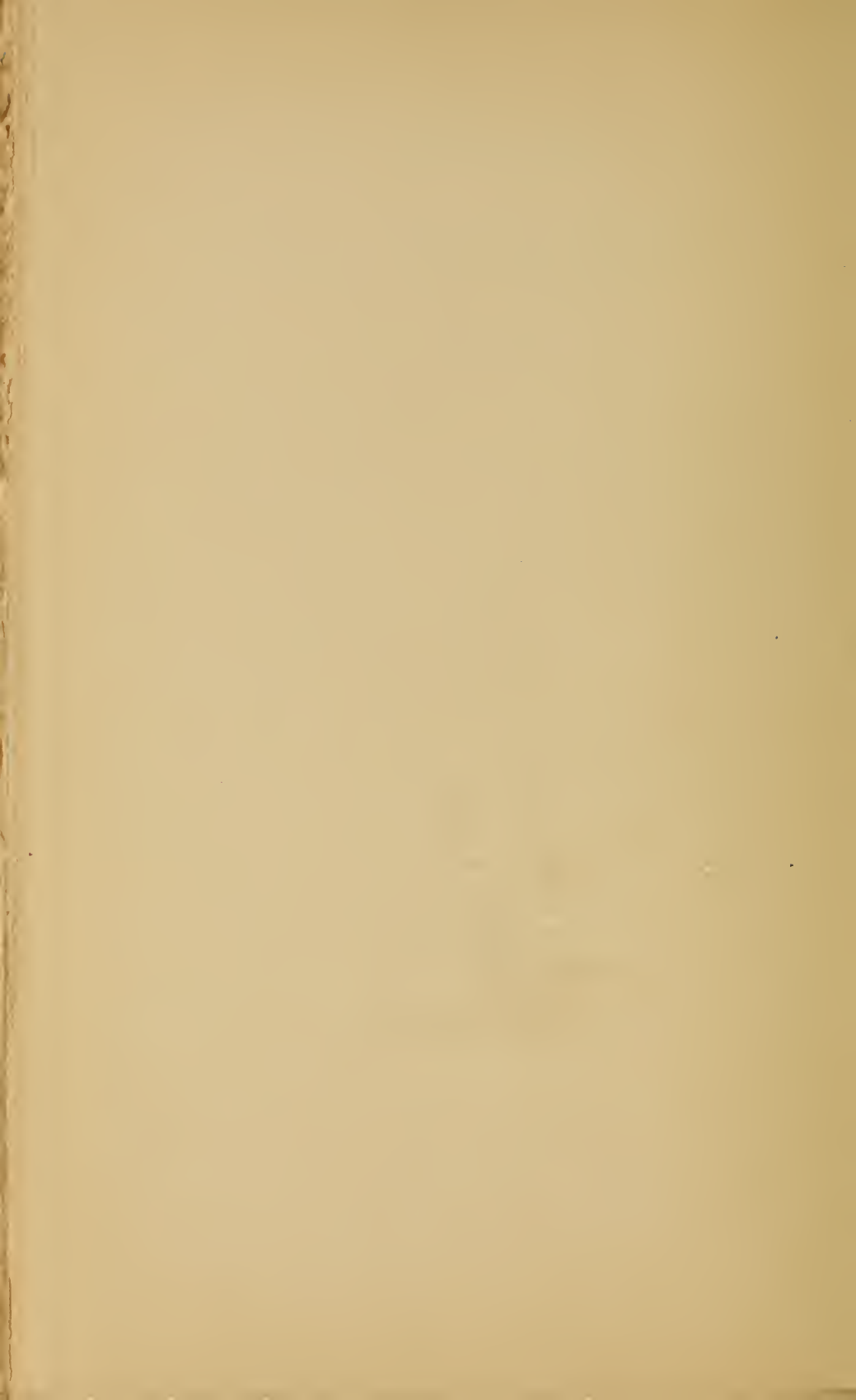
## CAPRICCIOS

HE

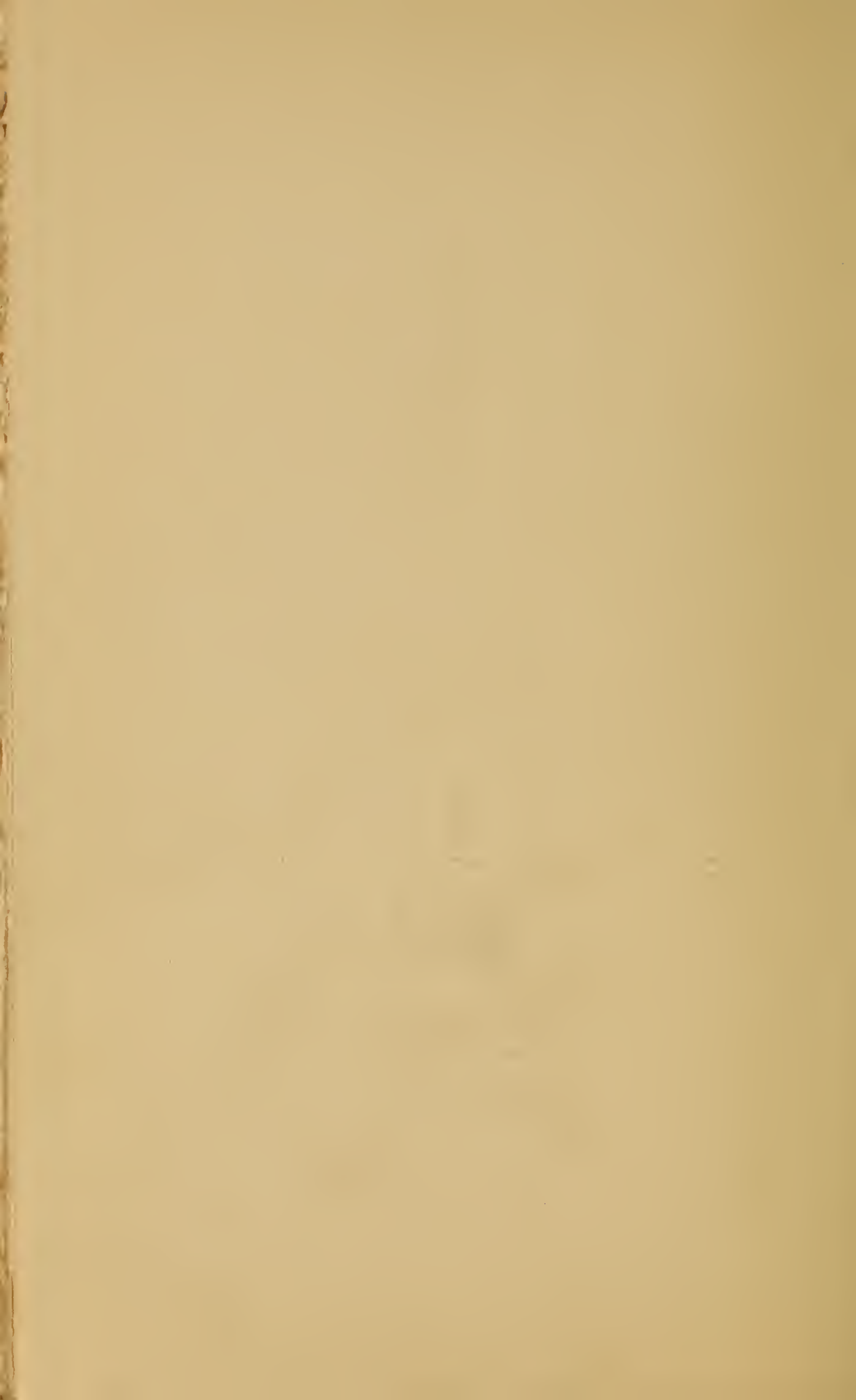
There is but one end to life and thought and hope,  
and we are the one joy that is in all that is.

THE END.

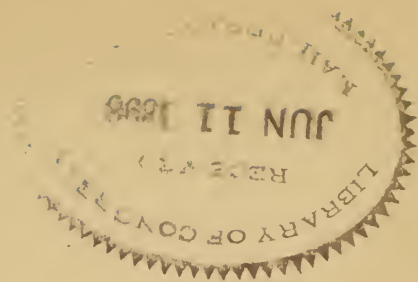




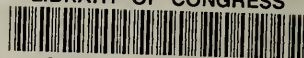








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